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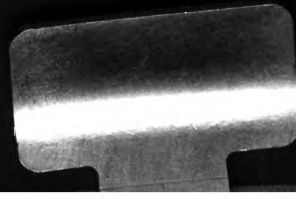

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BY

COLONEL F. CHENEVIX TRENCH

MILITARY ATTACHÉ AT ST PETERSBURG

BEING THE SIXTH VOLUME OF

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EDITED BY

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PREFACE.

It has been said that a great general, like a great poet, is born, not made; and if this be true at all in any peculiar sense, it is true of the cavalry general, who must be well endowed with the gifts of nature before he begins to develop them by study and practice. But there is another saying, quite as true as the first, that genius consists in a capacity for taking trouble. One might drive a coach and six through either of these sayings, but there is an element of truth in both of them. No short-sighted, slow-thinking, muddle-headed man can make a good officer of any kind, least of all a good cavalry officer. But it would be quite as great an error to expect great things from one whose mind never rises above field sports and athletics. As a matter of fact, the Frederics and Napoleons of history have been thorough students as well as practical soldiers, and an officer who does not read can never, in these days, hope to excel.

No one who is well acquainted with the Service as it exists will feel any anxiety lest cavalry officers should become over-studious. They will themselves be ready

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to admit that if there is any tendency to err from perfection, it does not lie in the direction of excessive book-learning; and if midnight oil is consumed, the rays of the lamp do not invariably shine from the library. Yet that most brilliant, and even rash cavalry commander, whose name is a proverb for courage—Prince Rupert—was a student, a philosopher, and an inventor.

All this is only intended to deprecate the too frequent cry, 'What does a cavalry officer want of books?' and to persuade him, if possible, to read this volume, which has been written by a cavalry officer who has had special opportunities for studying his arm of the Service, not only at home, but in two of the great military empires. In one of them—Germany—the work of cavalry pure and simple is now being pushed as far as it will go; and in the other—Russia—the old but newly revived practice of training cavalry to fight on foot has attained a development which will cause the next war in which she is engaged to be full of important lessons.

Without interfering with the excellent chapter of Colonel Chenevix Trench on this important and much-debated question of dismounted action of cavalry, I would venture to point out that it has been brought into great prominence in our late and present Egyptian campaigns. The real cavalry, so called, have acted on foot with marked success; and it may be asked, what is mounted infantry but improvised cavalry armed with a good weapon, as all the Russian cavalry are, and supposed to be incapable of charging? But though I am one of those who do not believe that the charging days

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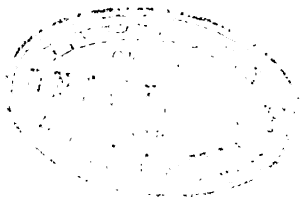
of cavalry are numbered, neither can I doubt that charges will become less frequent than they once were, and this function of cavalry will fall gradually into less esteem than others which were peculiar to that arm, but in the exercise of which mounted infantry is gradually taking the place of cavalry. When we see mounted infantry sent to the front and cavalry kept back, it seems time for cavalry officers to ask themselves what is the reason, and what is likely to be the result to their arm, if another is improvised to perform the skirmishes, the reconnaissance, and generally the most forward duties of the army, simply because, while mounted, it is trained to fight on foot.

C. B. BRACKENBURY.



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CAVALRY IN MODERN WAR.

CHAPTER I.

ORGANISATION OF CONTINENTAL CAVALRY.

Outline sketch of the organisation, strength, and armament of the German cavalry — Similar sketch of the French cavalry — Similar sketch of the Austrian cavalry—Similar sketch of the Russian regular cavalry—Sketch of organisation of the Cossacks.

THE following outline sketches of the cavalry of the chief Continental armies are here given, in order that the reader may, without burdening his memory too much with figures and details, or having to consult various standard works, be able to make himself in some degree acquainted with the composition, organisation, and strength of these forces. The account given of the Russian cavalry is more full than that of the others, inasmuch as it has lately been reorganised, and differs now in armament and training from cavalry of the established European type. The details, moreover, of its last reorganisation—viz. that of 1882—are not to be found in any standard English military work.

The German Cavalry.

Different Classes of Cavalry.—The German cavalry is of 4 different kinds, viz.—

Cuirassiers	12	regiments
Dragoons	38	,,
Hussars	18	,,
Lancers	25	,,
Total . . .	93	,,

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Nationality of Corps.—The nationality of these regiments is as follows :—

Prussian Guard . . .	8	regiments
,, Line . . .	64	,,
Bavarian	10	,,
Saxon	6	,,
Brunswick	1	,,
Würtemberg . . .	4	,,
Total . . .	93	,,

Effective Strength of Corps.—The effective strength of each of these corps, which are composed of 4 squadrons and a depot squadron, is as follows :—

Guard Corps.—Each regiment of the Guard consists of—

Officers	35
Non-commissioned officers and men .	755
Horses	787

Line Corps.—Each Prussian cavalry regiment of the Line consists of—

Officers	25
Non-commissioned officers and men .	727
Horses	749

Brigade.—A German cavalry brigade comprises 2 regiments and a battery of horse artillery attached.

Division.—A cavalry division generally comprises 6 regiments—i.e. 3 brigades of 2 regiments each—and 2 batteries of horse artillery.

Classification.—The German cavalry may be divided into 2 general heads, viz.—

Firstly, the active or regular cavalry.

Secondly, the Reserve cavalry.

Active or Regular Cavalry.—The active or regular cavalry consists of the 93 regiments which have been already detailed.

Total Effective Strength.—The total strength represented by these 93 corps may be stated as follows :—

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Officers	2,358
Non-commissioned officers and men .	64,699
Horses	62,581

It may be remarked that the cavalry corps in the German army are maintained at such a high strength both of men and horses during peace time that the difference between their peace and war establishments is very slight, and far less than that of other branches of the service.

Distribution of the Cavalry on Active Service.—Immediately on mobilisation a cavalry regiment is attached to each of the 37 infantry divisions as divisional cavalry. The remaining 56 regiments, which are not employed in this way, are available for the formation of 9 independent cavalry divisions with 1 brigade to spare.

Composition of an Independent Cavalry Division.—An independent cavalry division, in its normal formation, is composed of the divisional staff and of 3 brigades—i.e. 2 of light and 1 of heavy cavalry. Each of these brigades consists of 2 regiments of 4 squadrons each, and of 2 or 3 batteries of horse artillery, 8 waggons, a field forge, and 3 artillery waggons. In addition to these there are 3 waggons for small-arm ammunition, intended for carrying the carbine cartridges. Each division has its own separate administrative services.

Combatant Strength.—The combatant strength represented by a division of the strength already detailed is 3,600 sabres.

When a train of waggons with food, forage, ammunition, &c. &c., is attached to the division the total effective strength, stated in detail, is as follows :—

Officers	220
Non-commissioned officers and men .	4,726
Horses	5,236
Guns	12 or 18
Waggons	198

This train of waggons is only able to carry rations, forage, &c., for a division at its full strength for about 3 days and a half. It is only when a division has been reduced by

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the losses incidental to active service that this number of waggons can carry the supplies necessary for a longer period than the above. It is, however, only in exceptional cases that it would be necessary to attach waggons for transport of rations and forage to a cavalry division, inasmuch as such supplies are generally requisitioned from the country which is the scene of operations.

Armament.—In addition to the sabre all the German cavalry is armed with the Mäuser carbine. The uhlans have the lance in addition to the sabre and carbine.

Period of Service.—The period of service in the German cavalry is the same as that of the infantry—viz. for 3 years, with a certain number of 1-year volunteers. In the cavalry, however, men are allowed to serve for 4 years, receiving certain advantages, and a great proportion of the men in the cavalry are composed of these 4-years' service men.

The cavalry recruits all join their regiments at the beginning of November in each year. The recruit has to take his place in the ranks in a period of between 6 and 7 months after joining.

Reserve Cavalry.—In addition to the 93 permanent regiments already detailed, Germany is known to have measures matured for putting in the field a formidable force of Reserve cavalry in case of need, which would form a portion of the 'Reserve Field Troops' (*Reserve-Feld-Truppen*).

These Reserve regiments can be formed entirely of Reserve cavalry men from 24 to 27 years of age.

Number of Regiments of Reserve Cavalry.—It is said that on an average 2 of these regiments, each with 602 horses to each corps d'armée, could be raised, which gives 144 squadrons in all.

Duties of Reserve Cavalry in time of War.—These Reserve cavalry regiments are intended either to furnish the infantry of the Line or the Reserve with divisional cavalry or to perform *Etappen* duties.

Measures taken when Mobilisation is ordered.—When the order for mobilisation is given, the 5th squadron of each regiment of the regular cavalry at once goes to the depot.

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The strength of this squadron, or reserve depot, is as follows :—

Officers	5
Non-commissioned officers and men .	202
Horses	213

Also a section of 61 workmen not included in the ranks. On the order for mobilisation being received, the transfer of ineffectives, both men and horses, to the depot squadron, and effectives from the depot squadron, is easily managed at once. Some 20 or 30 horses per squadron have also to be purchased, in order to bring up the regiments to their war strength. With a view of obviating any unnecessary delay on this account, an order was issued some few years ago empowering cavalry commanding officers to make provisional contracts for the immediate supply of these augmentation horses. The result of these and other similar measures is that the German cavalry can now be mobilised in about half the time required by the other branches of the army. Consequently it can take the field, cover the concentration of its own forces, and can have done much of the preliminary work which specially pertains to it on the outbreak of a campaign by the time that its own army is ready for action. The principle which has enabled this result to be attained is a perfect system of decentralisation, which necessitates, and therefore ensures, an equal distribution of work.

Certain cavalry corps of the permanent army, which are expressly designated for this purpose, hold ready in time of peace all that is necessary for the organisation and equipment of the Reserve cavalry—viz. accoutrements, uniforms, carriages, harness, &c. &c.

The necessary number of horses are bought or requisitioned at the moment of mobilisation. All the permanent cavalry regiments of each corps d'armée would assist in furnishing these Reserve regiments with a commandant and 3 non-commissioned officers for each squadron.

In addition to this, on the outbreak of war a depot of 300 horses is formed in the territory of each German corps d'armée.

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Return showing the Total Effective Strength of the German Cavalry on April 1, 1883.

Cavalry	Officers	Non-commissioned Officers	Assistant Quarter-masters	Trumpet Majors and Trumpeters	Rank and File	Hospital Staff	Regimental Trades-men	Total	Doctors	Quartermasters	Veterinary Surgeons	Armourers	Saddlers	Troop Horses
Prussian : 73[1] regiments and a cavalry school . .	1,851	5,634	75	1,174	41,954	365	1,470	50,672	206	74	371	73	73	49,047
Saxony : 6 regiments and a cavalry school . . .	151	463	6	96	3,468	30	120	4,183	16	6	30	6	6	4,032
Würtemberg : 4 regiments .	100	308	4	64	2,236	20	80	2,712	9	4	20	4	4	2,612
Bavaria : 10 regiments and a cavalry school . . .	256	842	11	163	5,860	51	205	7,132	31	12	31	10	10	6,890
Total . . .	2,358	7,247	96	1,497	53,518	466	1,875	64,699	262	96	452	93	93	62,581

[1] This number includes a Brunswick corps.

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Return showing in detail the Composition and Strength of the different Cavalry Regiments of the German Army.

Designation of Regiments	Officers			Officers' Horses	Men							Troop Horses	Waggon Horses	Surgeons	Surgeons' Horses	Staff				Staff Horses	Total Strength	
	Field Officers	Captains	Lieutenants		Non-commissioned Officers	Assistant Quartermasters	Trumpet Majors	Trumpeters	Rank and File	Hospital Orderlies	Workmen	Total					Quartermasters	Armourers	Saddlers	Veterinary Surgeons		Men	Horses
1 Prussian regiment (Gardes du Corps) .	3	11	21	86	82	1	2(1)	20	573	5	20	703	678	20	4	2	1	1	1	10	1	755	787
72 Prussian regiments: cuirassiers, lancers, dragoons, and hussars of the Guard and of the Line, each	2	5	18	59	77	1	1	15	573	5	20	692	667	20	2–6	2	1	1	1	5	1	727–731	749
6 Saxon regiments: dragoons, carabineers, hussars, and uhlans, each . .	2	5	18	59	77	1	1	15	578	5	20	697	672	20	2	2	1	1	1	5	1	732	754
4 Würtemberg regiments: dragoons and uhlans, each .	2	5	18	59	77	1	1	15	559	5	20	678	653	20	2–3	2	1	1	1	5	1	713–714	735
10 Bavarian regiments: heavy and light cavalry, each .	2	5	18	59	77	1	1	15	568	5	20	687	662	20	2–4	2	1	1	1	3	1	720–722	744

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The Austrian Cavalry.

The Austrian regular cavalry is composed of 41 regiments.

Different Kinds of Cavalry.—The different kinds of regular cavalry may be classified as follows :—

Dragoons	14	regiments
Hussars	16	,,
Lancers	11	,,
Total	41	,,

Strength of each Regiment.—Each cavalry regiment has 6 field squadrons and a depot cadre, which in time of war assumes the name of and forms a depot squadron and furnishes a reserve squadron.

Strength of a Squadron.—The strength of a squadron is as follows :—

Officers	5
Non-commissioned officers and men	166
Horses	149

Depot.—The depot cadre has a peace and a war establishment, which is as follows :—

Peace Footing.

Officers	2
Non-commissioned officers and men	17
Horses	4

War Footing.

Officers	8
Non-commissioned officers and men	168
Horses	150

The depot cadre in time of peace has the charge of books and furlough muster rolls, and takes note of all particulars connected with the Reserve establishments. It also has charge of the stores of arms, accoutrements, clothing, &c.

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&c., which are kept in readiness for the expansion of the depot upon the outbreak of war.

Establishment of a Regiment.—The establishment of an Austrian cavalry regiment may be stated as follows :—

On a Peace Footing.

Officers	36
Non-commissioned officers and men	1,073
Horses	903

On a War Footing.

Officers	36
Non-commissioned officers and men	1,431
Horses	1,259

The difference between the peace and war establishments of an Austrian cavalry regiment is caused by the expansion of the depot cadre and the increase of the regimental staff.

Brigade.—An Austrian cavalry brigade generally consists of 2 regiments of 6 squadrons each.

Division.—A cavalry division consists of 2 brigades. To each of these brigades a battery of horse artillery (6 guns) is generally attached.

Total Effective Strength.—The total effective strength of the Austrian cavalry may be estimated as follows :—

In Time of Peace.

Non-commissioned officers and men	42,271
Horses	37,023

In Time of War.

Non-commissioned officers and men	58,671
Horses	51,619

Distribution into Brigades and Divisions.—The organisation of the 41 Austrian cavalry regiments into brigades and divisions is as follows :—

A brigade of 2 regiments forms part of each of the 13 army corps, i.e. 26 regiments in all.

The independent cavalry divisions of regular cavalry

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which would be organised in time of peace are 4 in number. 3 of these divisions, 1st, 2nd, and 4th, are composed of 2 brigades of 2 regiments each, i.e. 12 regiments in all.

One of these divisions (3rd) is composed of 3 regiments only.

A 5th independent cavalry division would be formed in case of mobilisation from the Hungarian Landwehr or Honved.

The 41 regiments of the Austrian regular cavalry are therefore accounted for as follows :—

13 brigades	. . . .	26 regiments
3 divisions	. . . .	12 ,,
1 division	. . . .	3 ,,
Total	. . .	41 ,,

Measures taken when Mobilisation is ordered.—As in Germany, the Austrian cavalry can be put into the field sooner than the other branches of the service, inasmuch as, with the exception of the depot cadre, the regiments are always maintained on a war footing. They are therefore able and ready at once to take the field, as the waggons for the regiment transport are always kept in store at the respective head-quarters of the regiments, and only the horses and drivers have to be furnished.

When a mobilisation is ordered, the depot cadre or depot squadron, which is the title which it then assumes, takes charge of and manages all necessary details for carrying the mobilisation into effect. The augmentation in men is obtained by calling in the furlough and Reserve men. The augmentation in horses is effected by purchase and requisition to the extent required. The additional complement of officers is obtained by calling in the officers of Reserve and of the pension list, and if these do not suffice, then by promotions in the regiments. All untrained men and horses are transferred from the strength of the field squadrons to the strength of the depot, and their places filled up by efficient men and horses from the depot.

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The depot squadron, moreover, provides for the subsequent reliefs by the supply of both men and horses, which have to be sent in place of those expended in the campaign. It undertakes the training of recruits and young horses, furnishes the clothing and equipment, and in short has to do everything necessary for maintaining the efficiency of the squadrons in the field.

After providing for the wants of the regimental staff and the 6 field squadrons the depot squadron has to establish the reserve squadron, and finally to recruit itself up to its prescribed war strength and maintain a full complement of both men and horses while sending the necessary reliefs to the front.

Period of Service.—The term of service with the colours in the Austrian cavalry is 3 years. The cavalry soldier then passes into the Reserve.

Armament.—The Austrian cavalry is armed with the sabre and the Werndl carbine. In the lancer regiments, however, only 45 men per squadron carry carbines.[1] The remainder of the squadron is armed with revolvers of the Gasser pattern. The officers and non-commissioned officers of the hussars and dragoons are also armed with the same weapon.

Pioneers.—Up to a recent date in every Austrian cavalry regiment the 4th section of the 6th squadron was specially trained in the duties of pioneers. In 1880, however, the pioneer detachments were made independent of the squadron.

The French Cavalry.

The French cavalry is composed of 77 regiments, which may be classified generally as follows :—

Home regiments	70
African regiments	7
Total . . .	77

[1] Since these pages were in the press the lance has been abolished in the Austrian cavalry.

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Different Kinds of Cavalry.—The 70 home regiments comprise 5 kinds of cavalry, viz.—

Cuirassiers	12	regiments
Dragoons	26	,,
Chasseurs	20	,,
Hussars	12	,,
Total	70	,,

The African regiments comprise 2 kinds of cavalry :—

Chasseurs d'Afrique	4	regiments
Spahis	3	,,
Total	7	,,

Strength of each Cavalry Regiment.—The strength of each cavalry regiment of the Line is as follows :—

Officers	34
Non-commissioned officers and men	686
Horses	689

Number of Squadrons.—Each regiment has 5 squadrons, i.e. 4 active and 1 depot squadron. The Chasseurs d'Afrique and the Spahis have each 6 squadrons.

Brigade.—A French cavalry brigade is ordinarily composed of 2 regiments of 4 squadrons, each with a battery of horse artillery attached. As an exceptional case a French cavalry brigade may be composed of 3 regiments.

A cavalry division is composed of 3 brigades (i.e. 1 brigade of cuirassiers and 2 of cavalry of the Line), to each of which a battery of horse artillery is attached.

Distribution into Brigades and Divisions.—The distribution of the 70 cavalry regiments is arranged as follows :—

36 regiments are formed into 18 brigades of 2 regiments each.

One of these brigades is attached to each of the 18 army corps.

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The remaining 34 regiments are formed into 5 independent cavalry divisions of 6 regiments each, and 2 brigades unattached.

The first-named 18 brigades may be looked upon as divisional cavalry.

The remaining regiments thus formed into brigades and divisions are utilised whenever their services may be required.

Each brigade of divisional cavalry bears the same number as the army corps to which it is attached.

The 34 regiments or 17 brigades not belonging to army corps are made up of different kinds of cavalry, as follows :—

6	brigades	of cuirassiers
4	,,	,, dragoons
4	,,	,, hussars
3	,,	,, chasseurs

Total, 17 brigades or 34 regiments.

Total Strength of French Cavalry.—The total strength of the French cavalry, including that in Algeria, may be stated as follows :—[1]

Field officers	386
Captains and subalterns	3,210
Non-commissioned officers (including corporals)	15,000
Rank and file	50,155
Total	68,751
Horses	61,669

At its total strength the cavalry of the French army is intended to be one-ninth of the infantry.

Independent Cavalry Divisions.—An independent cavalry division consists, as has already been stated, of 3 brigades.

[1] These figures are taken from the French Military Estimates for 1883.

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1 of these brigades is composed of heavy cavalry, i.e. of cuirassiers, and 2 of light cavalry.

Each regiment has 4 squadrons in the field, with an effective strength of 143 combatants and 150 horses. There are also 3 batteries attached to the division.

Total, 24 squadrons and 18 guns.

Period of Service.—The period of service in the French cavalry is for 5 years nominally. A great proportion, however, of the men only actually serve for a period of about 3½ to 4 years, and are at the end of that time dismissed to their homes.

Recruits.—The period of service for cavalry recruits nominally begins in July of each year. They do not, however, actually join their regiments till November.

Armament.—Cuirassiers, and also the non-commissioned officers of all cavalry regiments, are armed with sword and revolver.

The other cavalry regiments are armed with the 'Gras' carbine. This weapon, which is an excellent one, takes the same ammunition as the Gras rifle, with which the French infantry is armed.

The Russian Cavalry.

The Russian cavalry is, for reasons which will be detailed hereafter, specially worthy of notice at the present time, inasmuch as, owing to recent changes which have been made, it now differs in type, training, and equipment from all other European cavalry, and is avowedly intended rather to act as mounted infantry than as regular cavalry of the established type, such as is maintained in the other European armies.

The Russian cavalry may be divided into the regular cavalry and the Cossacks.

Regular Cavalry.—The regular cavalry is composed of the cavalry of the Guard and the cavalry of the Line.

Cavalry of the Guard.—The cavalry of the Guard comprises 10 regiments, viz.—

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Cuirassiers	4	regiments
Lancers	2	,,
Hussars	2	,,
Dragoons	2	,,
Total . . .	10	,,

Cavalry of the Line.—The cavalry of the Line comprises 46 regiments, which are all dragoons.

Thus the total number of regiments in the regular cavalry is 56, of which 48 are dragoons. Of these latter there are 2 regiments in the cavalry of the Guard.

Irregular Cavalry.—In addition to the regular cavalry there is a very large force of Cossacks, or what may be termed irregular cavalry.

An outline sketch of the new organisation of the Cossack cavalry is given at the end of this chapter.

The Russian cavalry is organised into 20 divisions, which may be classified as follows :—

Guard cavalry divisions	2
Line cavalry divisions	14
Cavalry of the Caucasus	3
Division of Don Cossacks . . .	1
Total . . .	20

In time of war the constitution of the Guard cavalry is somewhat altered, inasmuch as 3 divisions of Guard cavalry are formed instead of 2. A detail of the regiments, both of the regular cavalry, of the regiments of the Don, and other Cossacks which compose these 20 divisions of cavalry, and also an explanation of the modification which takes place in the constitution of the Guard cavalry divisions on the outbreak of war, will be found at the end of this chapter.

Line Cavalry.—Each of the first 14 cavalry divisions (Nos. 1–14) are composed of 3 regiments of dragoons and 1 regiment of Cossacks. These 14 divisions, therefore, absorb 42 out of the 46 regiments of the cavalry of the Line.

The composition of the cavalry divisions both of the

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Guard and of the Line, of 3 divisions of the cavalry of the Caucasus, and of the 1st division of the cavalry of the Don will be found set forth at the end of this chapter.

Strength of Regular Cavalry Regiments.—Up to the year 1883 a Russian cavalry regiment, both of the Guard and of the Line, consisted of 4 effective or field squadrons. Each squadron comprised 4 squads or pelotons (*Züge*) of 16 files each. This gave 128 men in the ranks of each squadron.

In the autumn, however, of the year 1883 the strength of every one of these regiments was increased from 4 effective or field squadrons to 6.[1]

This addition, however, has not been effected quite all at once, but is to be spread over a period of 3 years. For the first year the squadrons will consist of 4 squads of 12 files each. During the second year the squads will be increased to 14 files, and in the third year the squadrons will be brought up to the strength at which they have always been maintained, viz. 4 squads of 16 files each, i.e. 128 rank and file.

It will be seen that when this change has been completed the strength of the Russian cavalry, both of the Guard and of the Line, will be increased by 50 per cent.

The normal peace and war establishments of 52 out of the 56 regular cavalry regiments, as they will be when this increase has been completed, is as follows :—

Normal Establishment of Regiments of Russian Cavalry of Six Squadrons.

	Peace Footing	War Footing
Mounted combatants:		
Officers	38	36
Non-commissioned officers, rank and file	859	859
Dismounted combatants	150	61
Horses	893	940

[1] Except the 4 Guard Cuirassier regiments, which have still only 4 field squadrons.

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	Peace Footing	War Footing
Non-combatants:		
Officers (Regimental Staff)	5	5
Non-commissioned officers, rank and file .	67	33
Total non-combatants . . .	72	38

It will be seen from this table that the Russian cavalry regiments contain a very large proportion both of dismounted combatants and also non-combatants.

This large proportion of dismounted men and non-combatants enables the regiments always to appear on parade, and to take the field, at their full fighting strength.

Brigade.—A Russian cavalry brigade is composed of 2 regiments.

Division.—A Russian cavalry division is composed of 2 brigades, i.e. of 4 regiments.

The following remarks, by an able writer, regarding the employment of the Russian cavalry divisions in future warfare may here be quoted, as they contain much information which will be of interest to the reader who wishes to gain an insight into the actual state and organisation of the Russian cavalry in the present day :[1]—'The use of cavalry in large bodies for strategical purposes—that is to say, for independent enterprises against an enemy in concentration, or against his communications, or, again, for screening the advance of his own main army, for temporary occupation of an invaded district, and for other similar purposes, appears to be fully appreciated in Russia, with the consciousness too of the large means available for such undertakings; for although the proportion of cavalry to infantry in the standing army is small in Russia compared to what it is in Germany, there being only 21 divisions of regular cavalry, including

[1] See a most interesting and well-written article, 'The Russian Army in 1882,' in No. cxix. of the *Journal of the United Service Institution*, by Colonel Sir Lumley Graham, Bart.

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that of the Caucasus and the first category of the Don Cossacks, against 48 divisions of infantry, the former, too, weaker and the latter stronger than those of Germany, so that, allowing the usual number of 2 infantry divisions to the army corps, there would be 5 army corps without any cavalry, whilst each of the others would have only from 18 to 24 squadrons and sotnias; still, independently of the 40 extra Don Cossack regiments to be raised on the outbreak of war, and to be formed into 10 divisions, which would join the 24 Russian infantry divisions then also to be organised, there would be still further supplies of horsemen from the Don territory, besides some 30 or 40 regiments of Cossacks from Astrakhan, the Caucasus, the Ural, and Orenburg, all which levies would join the armies in second line, and be pushed to the front later on if required. Moreover, it is in contemplation to increase the strength of the regular cavalry, for doing which there are abundant means.[1] All things considered, therefore, Russia may well feel confident of her ability to pour, as soon as war is declared, the 9 or 10 regular cavalry divisions, kept at all times complete, together with their horse artillery, over the western and south-western frontiers, near which they are permanently stationed, and to support these afterwards with further masses of mounted men. The excellent firearm now issued or in course of issue to the Russian trooper, the thorough training in its use which he is receiving, combined with careful instruction in throwing up field works, and, lastly, the horse artillery attached to cavalry divisions, should render them capable of independent action: and for such they are being carefully prepared in peace; witness the manœuvres in the Warsaw and Wilna districts. The constitution and distribution of cavalry divisions or corps for great strategical movements are much discussed, and the question at present remains unsolved.'

Period of Service.—The period of service in the Russian

[1] This has, as already stated, been done since the above remarks were written.

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cavalry is the same as in the infantry, i.e. 6 years with the colours and 9 in the Reserve.

Proportion of Cavalry to Infantry.—The proportion of cavalry to infantry in the Russian army is less than in the other chief European armies. Taking the number of the infantry, according to Russian calculations, at 1½ million bayonets, the proportion is 1 to 15. In the following armies the proportion is as follows :—

German and French . . .	1 to 11
Austrian	1 to 9

Depot Squadron.—In addition to the 6 effective squadrons there is a depot or reserve squadron belonging to each of the regular cavalry regiments.

The number of these depots, therefore, is as follows :—

Guard cavalry depots	10
Line depots	46
Total	56

The present strength of these depots is as follows :—

Officers	5
Non-commissioned officers and men, about	155
Remounts, about	163

These depot squadrons are, as regards administration and command, independent of the regiments to which they correspond.[1] Up to the autumn of 1883 the depots of the Guard cavalry regiments were only separated from their corps in time of war. At present, however, all the depots, both of the Guard and of the Line, are, as a rule, quartered at a distance from their regiments.[2]

[1] These depots or reserve squadrons are now united together in groups of 3, and each of these groups forms a cadre of the cavalry Reserve. Hence for the 3 regular cavalry regiments of each Line division there is one Reserve cadre. Two of these cadres form a brigade of Reserve cavalry. The normal effective strength of a reserve cadre will, from next year, be as follows: officers, 16; non-commissioned officers and men, 402; horses, 510.

[2] It is hoped that by the autumn of 1886 the 3 depots forming each reserve cadre will have been united and stationed together.

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The men of the cavalry depots are employed in breaking in the remounts for their respective corps. In time of war they send detachments of men and horses to make good the losses incurred in the course of the campaign.

On mobilisation these depots receive officers and men of the Reserve, who have before served in the cavalry, and who are recalled to the colours in order to keep up an adequate supply of men to the regiment while it is on active service.

Armament.—The whole of the Russian cavalry, both the Guard and the Line, in addition to the sabre, now carry the Berdan rifle and bayonet. This weapon is identical, both in calibre and construction, with the rifle carried by the infantry, except that it is somewhat shorter in the barrel and somewhat lighter. The officers and non-commissioned officers carry revolvers instead of the rifle.

The Cossack regiments are armed with the lance and rifle, but no bayonet.

The following is a list of the regiments of the Russian regular cavalry, both of the Guard and the Line, according to the new organisation, showing the brigades and divisions to which each corps belongs :—

CAVALRY OF THE GUARD.

FIRST DIVISION.

1st Brigade.

The Gentlemen of the Guard.
The Horse Guards.

2nd Brigade.

The Emperor's Cuirassiers.
The Empress's Cuirassiers.

SECOND DIVISION.

1st Brigade.

The Mounted Grenadiers.
The Lancers of the Guard.

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2nd Brigade.

The Dragoons of the Guard.
The Emperor's Hussars.
The mixed regiment of Don Cossacks.[1]
The squadron of Ural Cossacks of the Guard.

3rd Brigade.

The Lancers (Uhlans) of the Emperor.
The Grodno Hussars.

In time of peace the 5 horse artillery batteries of the Guard and the battery of Don Cossacks are grouped in 1 brigade, with the exception of the 3rd battery, which is stationed at Warsaw with the 3rd brigade of the 2nd Cavalry Division.

In time of war the constitution of the cavalry of the Guard is modified in the following manner :—

CUIRASSIER DIVISION.

The Gentlemen of the Guard.
The Horse Guards.
The Emperor's Cuirassiers.
The Empress's Cuirassiers.
The squadron of Ural Cossacks of the Guard.
The 1st and 4th batteries of the Horse Artillery of the Guard.

FIRST DIVISION OF THE GUARD CAVALRY.

The Mounted Grenadiers.
The Lancers of the Guard.
The Emperor's Hussars.
The Emperor's Cossacks.
The 2nd and 5th batteries of the Horse Artillery of the Guard.

[1] This mixed regiment of Don Cossacks is, in peace time, composed of 2 divisions of 2 squadrons each. 1 of these divisions is composed of Don Cossacks and 1 of Ataman Cossacks. On the outbreak of war these 2 divisions of 2 squadrons are each supplemented by 4 squadrons, thus forming 2 regiments of 6 squadrons each. These regiments are then called the Emperor's Cossacks and the Ataman Cossacks respectively.

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SECOND DIVISION OF THE GUARD CAVALRY.

The Dragoons of the Guard.
The Lancers of the Emperor.
The Grodno Hussars.
The Ataman Cossacks.
The 3rd battery of the Horse Artillery of the Guard.
The Cossack battery of Horse Artillery of the Guard.

CAVALRY OF THE LINE.

FIRST DIVISION.

1st Brigade.

The Emperor's Body Guard Dragoons, 'Moscow.'
2nd Dragoons, 'St. Petersburg.'
His Majesty the King of Bavaria's.

2nd Brigade.

3rd Dragoons, 'Soumy.'
The Crown Prince of Denmark's.
1st Cossacks of the Don.
1st and 2nd Horse Artillery Batteries.

SECOND DIVISION.

1st Brigade.

4th (Empress's Body Guard) Dragoons, 'Pskov.'
5th (Emperor's Body Guard) Dragoons, 'Courland.'

2nd Brigade.

6th (Emperor's Body Guard) Dragoons, 'Pavlograd.'
2nd Don Cossacks.
3rd and 4th Horse Artillery Batteries.

THIRD DIVISION.

1st Brigade.

7th Dragoons, 'New Russia.'
Grand Duke Vladimir Alexandrovitch's.
8th (the Emperor's) Dragoons, 'Smolensk.'

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2nd Brigade.

9th Dragoons, 'Elizabethgrad.'
The Queen of Würtemberg's.
3rd Don Cossacks.
5th and 6th Horse Artillery Batteries.

FOURTH DIVISION.

1st Brigade.

10th Dragoons, 'Ekaterinoslav.'
11th Dragoons, 'Kharkov.'
Grand Duchess Alexandra Petrovna's.

2nd Brigade.

12th Dragoons, 'Mariopol.'
Landgrave of Hesse's.
4th Cossacks of the Don.
7th and 8th Horse Artillery Batteries.

FIFTH DIVISION.

1st Brigade.

13th Dragoons, 'Kargopol.'
Grand Duke Constantine Nicholaevitch's.
14th Dragoons, 'Lithuania.'
Archduke Albrecht of Austria's.

2nd Brigade.

15th Dragoons, 'Alexandria.'
Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholaevitch's, sen.
5th Cossacks of the Don.
9th and 10th Horse Artillery Batteries.

SIXTH DIVISION.

1st Brigade.

16th Dragoons, 'Glowkhov.'
Grand Duchess Alexandra Josephovna's.
17th Dragoons, 'Volhynia.'
Grand Duke Constantine Nicholaevitch's.

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2nd Brigade.

18th Dragoons, 'Klastitsa.'
Grand Duke of Hesse's.
6th Cossacks of the Don.
11th and 12th Horse Artillery Batteries.

SEVENTH DIVISION.

1st Brigade.

19th Dragoons, 'Kinburn.'
The Grand Duke Michael Nicholaevitch's.
20th Dragoons, 'Olviopol.'

2nd Brigade.

21st Dragoons, 'White Russia.'
The Grand Duke Michael Nicholaevitch's.
7th Cossacks of the Don.
13th and 14th Horse Artillery Batteries.

EIGHTH DIVISION.

1st Brigade.

22nd Dragoons, 'Astrakhan.'
Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholaevitch's.
23rd Dragoons, 'Voznésensk.'
Prince Alexander of Hesse's.

2nd Brigade.

24th Dragoons, 'Loubny.'
The Archduke Charles Louis of Austria's.
8th Cossacks of the Don.
15th Horse Artillery Battery and 1st battery of Don Cossacks.

NINTH DIVISION.

1st Brigade.

25th Dragoons, 'Kazan.'
The Archduke Leopold of Austria's.
26th Dragoons, 'Bug.'
Prince Augustus of Würtemberg's.

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2nd Brigade.

27th Dragoons, 'Kiev.'
The Grand Duke Nicholas Maximilianovitch's.
1st Cossacks of the Ural.
16th Horse Artillery Battery and 2nd battery of Cossacks of the Don.

TENTH DIVISION.

1st Brigade.

28th Dragoons, 'Novgorod.'
Prince William of Würtemberg's.
29th Dragoons, 'Odessa.'
The Duke of Nassau's.

2nd Brigade.

30th Dragoons, 'Ingria.'
Grand Duke of Saxe Weimar's.
1st Cossacks of Orenburg.
17th Horse Artillery Battery and 3rd battery of Cossacks of the Don.

ELEVENTH DIVISION.

1st Brigade.

31st Dragoons, 'Riga.'
The Grand Duchess Catherine Michaelovna's.
32nd Dragoons, 'Tchuguiew.'
The Empress's.

2nd Brigade.

33rd Dragoons, 'Izioum.'
The Crown Prince of Germany and Prussia's.
11th Cossacks of the Don.
18th Horse Artillery Battery and 4th battery of Don Cossacks.

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TWELFTH DIVISION.

1st Brigade.

34th Dragoons, 'Starodoub.'
35th Dragoons, 'Bielgorod.'
The Emperor of Austria and Hungary's.

2nd Brigade.

36th Dragoons, 'Akhtyrka.'
Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia's.
12th Cossacks of the Don.
19th Horse Artillery Battery and 5th battery of Don Cossacks.

THIRTEENTH DIVISION.

1st Brigade.

37th Dragoons, 'Military Order of St. George.'
38th Dragoons, 'Vladimir.'
Grand Duke Michael Nicholaevitch's.

2nd Brigade.

39th Dragoons, 'Narva.'
Grand Duke Constantine Nicholaevitch's.
2nd Cossacks of Orenburg.
20th and 22nd Horse Artillery Batteries.

FOURTEENTH DIVISION.

1st Brigade.

40th Dragoons, 'Little Russia.'
41st Dragoons, 'Yamburg.'
The Grand Duchess Marie Alexandrovna's.

2nd Brigade.

42nd Dragoons, 'Mittau.'
Prince Albert of Prussia's.
14th Cossacks of the Don.
21st and 23rd Horse Artillery Batteries.

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FIRST DIVISION OF THE CAVALRY OF THE CAUCASUS.

1st Brigade.

44th Dragoons, 'Nijni Novgorod.'
His Majesty the King of Würtemberg's.
45th Dragoons, 'Siéversk.'
His Majesty the King of Denmark's.

2nd Brigade.

Regiment of Kouban Cossacks, 'Yeïsk.'
Regiment of Kouban Cossacks, 'Ouman.'
Irregular regiment of cavalry, 'Koutaïs.'
4th and 5th batteries of Kouban Cossacks.

SECOND DIVISION OF THE CAVALRY OF THE CAUCASUS.

1st Brigade.

43rd Dragoons, 'Tver.'
The Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholaevitch's, sen.
Khoper regiment of Kouban Cossacks.
Volga regiment of Terek Cossacks.

2nd Brigade.

Kouban regiment of Kouban Cossacks.
Gorsko Mozdok regiment of Terek Cossacks.
1st and 2nd horse artillery batteries of Kouban Cossacks.

THIRD DIVISION OF THE CAVALRY OF THE CAUCASUS.

1st Brigade.

Emperor's 46th Dragoons (Péreíaslaw).
Poltava regiment of Kouban Cossacks.

2nd Brigade.

Caucasus regiment of Kouban Cossacks.
Laba regiment of Kouban Cossacks.

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FIRST DIVISION OF DON COSSACKS.

1st Brigade.

9th Regiment of Don Cossacks.
10th Regiment of Don Cossacks.

2nd Brigade.

13th Regiment of Don Cossacks.
15th Regiment of Don Cossacks.
6th and 7th horse artillery batteries of Don Cossacks.

THE COSSACK CAVALRY.

The following sketch of the present organisation and training of the Cossacks is taken verbatim from the copious account of the Russian army by Colonel Sir Lumley Graham, already referred to :—

'The Cossacks have generally been classed under the head of irregular troops, and justly so, until of late years, but now that all Cossack cavalry are brigaded with the regulars, and are to all intents and purposes regular troops, it seems more appropriate to classify them as such, and to give a description of them in this place, particularly when we reflect upon the importance attached to them by many Russian officers, who consider them the *beau idéal* of cavalry. . . .'

Without going back to the ancient history of the origin of the Cossacks, &c., it may be said that 'new regulations for their maintenance came into force on January 1, 1875, being applied only to the Don Cossacks, but being afterwards extended to all the other bands.[1] Under this system the Cossack contingent is divided into 2 portions—the active portion and the Opoltchenié, the former being subdivided into 3 classes—the *preparatory*, the *field*, and the *reserve*. The conditions of service in each portion and class are very similar in the various Cossack regions. We will give those which apply to the Cossacks of the Don, the most numerous and important of all. Every youth capable of bearing arms

[1] See *Journal of the United Service Institution*, vol. xxvii. No. cxx., 'The Russian Army in 1882.'

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(with certain family exemptions) on attaining the age of 18 enters the *preparatory class*, in which he remains 3 years, during the first of which he is not required to perform any military duty, but must provide himself with a horse, equipment, and arms (except the Berdan rifle, half the cost of which is defrayed by the Government, half by the military treasury of the Cossack territory).

'During the next 2 years he is carefully trained, remaining, however, at his native village (*stanitza*). At 21 years of age the young Cossack enters the *field class* for 12 years, divided into 3 equal periods, during the first of which he serves in 1 of the 4 squadrons of Cossacks of the Guard, in 1 of the 15 regiments of Cossacks of the Line, or in the battery of the Guard, or in 1 of the 7 field batteries, all of which are in the 1st category of the field class, and are embodied in divisions of the standing army. During the next 4 years—i.e. from the age of 25 to 29—the Cossack belongs to the 2nd category of the *field class*, comprising Regiments Nos. 16-30 and Batteries Nos. 8-14. Officers and men of these regiments remain at home, but must keep their whole equipment, and also their horses, ready for immediate service. For the next 4 years—that is, until they have completed their 32nd year—the men belong to Regiments Nos. 31-45 and to Batteries Nos. 15-21, forming the 3rd category of the field class. They must keep their equipment in readiness for service, but are not required to provide themselves with horses except on mobilisation. When belonging to the 2nd and 3rd categories they are liable to be called out for 3 trainings, not exceeding 3 weeks each. Batteries forming part of the same categories only have 4 guns horsed at peace time. Cossacks of superior education enjoy the same privileges as other soldiers in the Russian army with regard to reduction of the lengths of service with the colours and to facilities for obtaining the ranks of non-commissioned officer and of officer. From the *field class* the Cossack passes into the *reserve* for 5 years, being during this time liable, in time of war, to be drafted into the active army or into a Reserve

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regiment. After this—that is, after completing his 37th year—the Cossack is drafted into the Opoltchenié, to which belong also all other able-bodied men who, for one reason or other, have not been embodied in the field class. To this force, which will only be called out under very exceptional circumstances, the Cossack is attached for 4 years, when, at 42 years of age, he is exempt from all further liability.

'The duties which Cossack troops are required to perform, and the regulations under which they serve, are pretty much the same as with the army at large. This applies to infantry and artillery as well as to cavalry. It is true, however, that less uniformity of appearance is insisted upon in the case of Cossack horsemen than in that of the Line cavalry; also less steadiness and cohesion is necessary, less display of proficiency in the riding school; but, on the other hand, the Cossack is expected to be more formidable in single combat, a better rider across country, more skilful as a partisan on outpost duty and reconnoitring duty than his comrade in the regulars, whilst he is at the same time his equal in fighting on foot.

'But, as we have before remarked, since the Cossack regiments of the 1st category have been embodied in the cavalry divisions, these distinctions have become less marked, and bid fair to disappear in time, each description of troops borrowing more and more from its sister corps. Already the term "irregular" is no longer applicable to Cossack regiments of the 1st category; and as regiments of the 2nd and 3rd categories are mainly composed of men who have served in the 1st category, the same may also be said of the latter corps. The Cossack hordes, however, which are domiciled more to the east have preserved their "irregular" characteristics to a greater extent: for instance, the Cossacks of the Ural retain a form of substitution, which the Government would be glad to do away with, but has not judged it expedient to do so.

'The Cossack was not well known in Western Europe till the campaign of 1812. His reputation was then established, and although he has not done much to raise it since

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the termination of the Napoleonic era, the impression which he then made has never been effaced from the imaginations of the inhabitants of the countries in which he appeared either as friend or foe. He was doubtless unpleasant in either capacity. We have only to deal with him from the latter point of view. It is sufficient to read Napoleon's despatches and orders, and the numerous military memoirs of the day, to be convinced of the great effect produced by the rapid movements and constant desultory attacks of the Cossack horsemen, even during the advance on Moscow. During the halt and subsequent retreat the Cossack was ubiquitous. No straggler had a chance, and in the demoralised state of the French army the terror inspired by these savage horsemen was extreme. The fame of their deeds spread westward as they advanced, and had its effect upon the new French levies. We find Napoleon constantly complaining of the mischief done by what he calls "this contemptible cavalry, which only makes a noise and would be unable to break a company of infantry." And this, though perhaps an exaggerated statement, does not seem to have been very far from the truth. The Cossack, dangerous as he was against a disorganised or demoralised foe, never appears to have gained great credit as a combatant.'[1] Be this as it may as regards former campaigns, the Cossack cavalry, armed, organised, and equipped as it now is, is deemed by many to be a formidable force, which may be expected to make its influence felt in any future European campaign in which it may take part. Some Russian officers speak highly of their conduct during the campaign of 1877–8, but with regard to their value as a fighting body a great difference of opinion appears to exist even in the Russian army.

The most recent reorganisation of the Cossack cavalry took place in the spring of 1883, and the different bodies which compose the force, with the horse artillery batteries

[1] As a matter of fact the majority of regimental Russian officers have very little real confidence in the fighting qualities of the Cossacks. The Russian cavalry Regulations prescribe that Cossacks are not to form part of the 1st or fighting line of a division.

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attached to them, may now be enumerated as follows, viz. :—

The Don Cossack cavalry.
The Kouban Cossack cavalry.
The Terek Cossack cavalry.
The Orenburg Cossack cavalry.
The Oural Cossack cavalry.
The Astrakhan Cossack cavalry.
The Siberian Cossack cavalry.
The Semiretschensk Cossack cavalry.
The Trans-Baikal Cossack cavalry.
The Amour Cossack cavalry.

All these bodies of Cossack cavalry have a peace and a war establishment. The strength of these establishments, together with a general sketch of their organisation, is here given.

The Don Cossack Cavalry.

The constitution of the Don Cossack cavalry was reorganised in the spring of 1883, and may be now stated as follows :—

In time of peace there are—

4 squadrons of the Body Guard ;

1*st Line*—15 regiments of 6 squadrons each

(11 of these regiments are incorporated in the division of regular cavalry ; the remaining 4—viz. Nos. 9, 10, 13, and 15—form the 1st division of the Cossacks of the Don) ;

1 horse artillery battery of Don Cossacks of the Guard ;

7 horse artillery batteries of the Line.

In war time this force can be supplemented by—

8 Reserve squadrons of the Body Guard ;

2*nd Line*—15 regiments (6 squadrons each) ;

30 squadrons for escort and transport duties ;

3*rd Line*—15 regiments (6 squadrons each) ;

14 horse artillery batteries of the Line.

The 12 squadrons of the Body Guard—i.e. 4 on the peace and 8 on the war establishment—form 2 regiments of the

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Body Guard in time of war—viz. the Cossacks of the Emperor and the Cossacks of the Ataman.

Total number of squadrons in war = 312.

The Kouban Cossack Cavalry.

The following is the cavalry contingent furnished by the Kouban Cossacks in time of peace :—

10 regiments of 6 squadrons ;
1 Guard squadron ;
2 squadrons at Warsaw ;
5 batteries of horse artillery of 4 guns.

In war time these can be supplemented by—

1 Guard squadron ;
2*nd Line*—10 regiments of 6 squadrons ;
3*rd Line*—10 regiments ;

The horse artillery batteries are also increased by 2 guns each.

Total number of squadrons in war time = 184.

The Terek Cossacks.

The following is the contingent furnished in peace time by the Terek Cossacks :—

1 Guard squadron ;
4 regiments of 4 squadrons ;
2 horse artillery batteries of 4 guns.

In time of war these can be supplemented by—

1 Guard squadron ;[1]
8 regiments of 4 squadrons.

The horse artillery batteries are increased by—

2 guns each.

Total number of squadrons in war time = 50.

[1] Always employed as the Emperor's escort.

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The Orenburg Cossack Cavalry.

The following is the contingent of cavalry furnished in peace time by the Orenburg Cossacks :—

30 squadrons = 6 regiments of 5 squadrons ;
1 horse artillery battery of 6 guns ;
1 ,, ,, 4 ,,
In time of war these can be supplemented by—
42 squadrons ;[1]
6 horse artillery batteries.
Total number of squadrons in war time = 60.

The Oural Cossacks.

The following is the contingent furnished in peace time by the Oural Cossacks :—

1 squadron of Body Guard ;
15 squadrons and 1 instructional squadron.
In time of war these can be supplemented by—
30 squadrons.
Total number of squadrons in war time = 47.

The Astrakhan Cossacks.

The following is the contingent furnished by the Astrakhan Cossacks in time of peace :—

1 regiment of 4 squadrons.
These can be supplemented in time of war by—
2 regiments of 4 squadrons.
Total number of squadrons in war time = 12.

The Siberian Cossacks.

The following is the contingent furnished by the Siberian Cossacks in time of peace :—

3 regiments of 6 squadrons.
In time of war these can be supplemented by—
6 regiments of 6 squadrons.
Total number of squadrons in war time = 54.

[1] 6 of these 42 squadrons go to reinforce the 6 regiments of 5 squadrons on the peace establishment. The remaining 36 form 6 regiments of 6 squadrons each.

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The Semiretschensk Cossacks.

The following is the contingent furnished by the Semiretschensk Cossacks in time of peace :—

1 regiment of 4 squadrons.

In time of war these can be supplemented by—

2 regiments of 4 squadrons.

Total number of squadrons in war time = 12.

The Trans-Baikal Cossacks.

The following is the contingent furnished by the Trans-Baikal Cossacks in time of peace :—

1 regiment of 6 squadrons ;

2 horse artillery batteries of 4 guns.

In time of war these can be supplemented by—

2 regiments of 6 squadrons ;

1 horse artillery battery of 6 guns.

The 2 horse artillery batteries in peace establishment have also 6 guns in time of war.

Total number of squadrons in war time = 18.

The Amour Cossacks.

The following is the contingent furnished by the Amour Cossacks in time of peace :—

2 squadrons.

In time of war these can be supplemented by—

4 squadrons.

Total number of squadrons in war time = 6.

The following *résumé* gives the number of Cossack squadrons which, according to the recent reorganisation, are now supposed to be available in time of war :—

Don Cossacks	312	squadrons
Kouban	184	,,
Terek	50	,,
Orenburg	72	,,
Oural	47	,,

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Astrakhan	12	squadrons
Siberian	54	,,
Semiretschensk	12	,,
Trans-Baikal	18	,,
Amour	6	,,
Total	767 [1]	,,

The peace and war establishment of a Don Cossack regiment (6 sotnias) is as follows :—

	In Peace	In War
Officers	32	21
Non-commissioned officers	56	86
Combatant, rank and file	742	686
Non-combatant do.	47	65
Transport waggons	5	21
,, horses	15	55
Troop horses	808	836

The total strength of the Cossack cavalry of the Russian army may be estimated approximately, according to official figures lately published, as follows :—

General officers	7
Field ,,	516
Officers	2,288
Non-commissioned officers and men	108,766
Horses	82,752

[1] The normal strength of each squadron is about 150 men and 8 non-commissioned officers.

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CHAPTER II.

THE BRITISH CAVALRY.

Defects in present organisation of cavalry—(1) Weak numerical strength of regiments—(2) Retention of the troop as the administrative and the squadron as the tactical unit—Disadvantages of this organisation—(3) Want of a fifth or depot squadron in addition to four field squadrons—Manner in which the Continental military Powers provide for the efficiency of cavalry corps at the shortest notice—Various alternative plans of reorganisation which have been proposed for the British cavalry, with defects which have prevented their adoption—Enumeration of points which should be kept in view in any scheme of reorganisation—Measures proposed for partial reorganisation—Concluding remarks—Establishments of the British cavalry.

In a volume written for the English military public a detailed account of the organisation of the British cavalry need scarcely find a place, inasmuch as the subject may fairly be supposed to be one with which the majority of readers will be well acquainted. As, however, the question of reorganising the British cavalry has been under consideration for some time past, and may possibly soon be taken in hand, it may be worth while to devote some little space to the consideration of how any changes which may be deemed necessary may best be carried out.

There are, as is well known, certain grave defects in the present organisation of our cavalry, which could hardly fail to cripple its efficiency on active service, especially if the campaign upon which it was engaged happened to be of long duration. These defects are the more vital inasmuch as organisation must precede action, and all theories and practical instruction are useless unless there is power to give them practical application in war.

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Putting minor shortcomings aside, the 3 main defects which any practical scheme of reorganisation should (if it is to be of any value at all) aim at removing may be named as follows, viz. :—

Firstly, the very small effective numerical strength, both in men and horses, of the regiments.

Take, for instance, a light cavalry brigade, composed of 3 regiments of hussars. Supposing that these corps are all on the higher establishment, they have only each of them about 600 men and 400 horses. After deducting untrained horses, remounts, and inevitable casualties, no hussar regiment on this establishment could put more than 350 mounted men into the field. Hence, as matters stand at present, a British light cavalry brigade comprises but a little over 1,000 horses at the most, even at the outset of a campaign. This is very little more than half the effective strength of a Continental—i.e. of a French, Austrian, Russian, or German—brigade. In the case of regiments in the lower establishments, who have only 300 horses and less than 500 combatants of all ranks, the available strength in men and horses is, of course, much less. Take, again, the case of a heavy cavalry brigade, such as the Household brigade. The 3 regiments composing it have only each 275 horses. If, therefore, they were ordered on service at any time, all the 3 corps together could not at the most put more than 700 horses in the field. If there were any reserves of men and horses this small numerical strength would not be of so much moment, but unfortunately the British cavalry possesses no such resources. The reserve men have no training, and no reserve of horses exists. The disadvantages of this small established strength are still further aggravated by the operation of the short service system, which has within the last 3 years or so begun to come fully into play in this branch of the service. Under it each of the 9 cavalry regiments serving in India now require an average reinforcement of some 75 to 80 drilled soldiers from home. Formerly—i.e. a few years ago—these wants were much less, and a depot at home of about 85 was found amply

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sufficient under all ordinary circumstances. To meet the number of men now annually required the strength of the depot should be maintained at an average strength of about 135 men, fluctuating between 175 just before the embarkation of the annual draft for India and 95 just after its despatch.

The result of all this is that, under present circumstances, whenever a few cavalry regiments have to be sent out with an expeditionary force they can only be made up to a respectable strength by a general and unreserved application of that most pernicious of all systems, viz. the wholesale borrowing of men and horses from other corps.

These evils were (as everyone who was acquainted with our cavalry organisation knew they would be) strikingly illustrated when a cavalry force was being prepared for the campaign in Egypt. For that expedition 4 cavalry regiments were required. 3 of them, the 4th and 7th Dragoon Guards and the 19th Hussars, were Line regiments, standing amongst those next for foreign service, and on the increased establishments of about 600 non-commissioned officers and men with 400 horses, while the 4th regiment consisted of a composite corps of 450 non-commissioned officers and men, made up by a squadron contributed by each of the 3 regiments of Household cavalry. Each of the 3 Line regiments sent about 650 men and 530 horses into the field. To these regiments were attached many officers from other corps, and they left behind them depots of from 150 to 200 strong. The requisite numerical strength was attained, but at the expense of every other cavalry regiment which remained in England. There were volunteering and transfers of officers, men, and horses from all sides. To such an extent was this carried that some of the home regiments sent out supporting and training depots almost bodily. In fact throughout the whole of the cavalry in England the utmost confusion prevailed. The services of those regiments quartered in Ireland were too much required in that country to allow of their being drawn upon to any great extent, but those in Great Britain were more or less

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denuded of effective officers, men, and horses. To such an extent was this system of borrowing and transfer carried that the 5th Dragoon Guards, which was the very corps standing next for service, gave away not far short of 200 horses and over 100 men, while the other regiments were all more or less spoiled. The result of the necessity of thus patching up the 3 corps going on active service was that there was not for many months after the Egyptian campaign a single Line cavalry regiment in a state of efficiency. To such an extent indeed was their efficiency impaired that it is doubtful if some of them could have put a squadron fit for work into the field. The case of the Household cavalry—at least that of the squadrons which were sent out to Egypt—was nearly the same; every troop in each of the 3 regiments which compose the brigade was laid under contribution for its best men and horses in order to make up the squadrons which were destined for the campaign.

The second great defect is the retention of the troop as the administrative and the squadron as the tactical unit. The absurdity and disadvantages of maintaining these two different units are so well known that it is scarcely necessary to dwell upon so threadbare a subject. Some remarks, however, on this point by the author of 'Cavalry Tactics' may here be quoted in relation to this point. 'Every system of organisation depends upon its unit. The unit of cavalry in the field—that is to say, the tactical unit—is the squadron. In every European cavalry except that of England the squadron is also the unit of organisation; for it has come to be acknowledged as a principle in war that the same men should always be under the same leaders, whether in quarters or on parade, in the bivouac or in battle. The importance of this principle can hardly be overrated, and it can only be carried out by making the tactical unit and the unit of organisation one and the same body.'[1]

Thirdly, the want of a depot troop or squadron, on the Continental model, in addition to and apart from the fighting effective strength of each regiment.

[1] *Cavalry Tactics*, p. 248.

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A regiment is a collection of squadrons, the number of which varies in the different Continental armies. In the German and French cavalry the number is 5, in the Austrian cavalry it is 6, while the most recent organisation of the Russian cavalry gives each regiment 7 squadrons. In our own service a cavalry corps is composed of 4. When, however, a regiment goes to India the retention at home of 1 troop as a depot virtually reduces the strength of the corps to 3 squadrons.

It is now universally acknowledged that of all arms cavalry is the one that is required to be in the most constant state of preparation for war, since it is generally a matter of vital importance for it to be pushed to the front at once, or, in our own case, to be present on the theatre of war in strong force at the very beginning of the campaign.[1] It is the recognition of this necessity which reconciles the great military Powers to the endurance of the heavy burden of keeping up vast hosts of cavalry at their full strength during long years of peace, in order to be ready for instant action on the outbreak of war. Similarly a force of British cavalry ought to be ready, though perhaps in a minor degree, to take the field without friction or confusion at once, and without drawing upon other regiments, in the event of its services being required in any quarter of the world. Unfortunately, however, unless the organisation of cavalry is specially adapted to this end, a very perfect state of preparation is impossible. How signally our present organisation fails in these essential points has just been shown. But it is not too much to say that very much of the friction and confusion which now takes place whenever a British cavalry force is required to take the field would be avoided if each corps possessed a strong effective depot squadron which was always maintained at its full strength.

All the great military Powers have had to face this problem—viz. to find a system which, while keeping down the cost of a naturally expensive arm to the lowest safe limit, shall provide for a proper force being forthcoming

[1] *Cavalry Tactics*, p. 255.

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at the shortest notice, together with the simultaneous establishments of the necessary depots.

'In every case the problem has been solved in the same way—that is, by giving to each regiment an establishment of one more squadron than is actually required to take the field. In our own service, when a regiment goes to India 1 troop is told off to remain in England as a depot, and the strength of the regiment is practically reduced to 3 squadrons. In Continental armies, on the order for mobilisation being received, to that squadron which is either always recognised as the depot, or to that squadron which is told off to become such, are transferred recruits and remounts who have not completed training, the sick, those who are medically unfit, &c.—every individual, in fact, who cannot at once go to the war. In return the same squadron gives up enough effective men to take the places of the others, also the whole or a sufficient number of its horses to complete the mounting of the regiment, which thereupon takes the field with 4 squadrons, the best number, all complete and ready on the instant for any service.' [1]

From this sketch of the system adopted in Continental armies it will be seen at once how defective is the present organisation of our cavalry. In short, as regards organisation the British cavalry may be said to be just where it was 30 or 40 years ago; it is not organised for war and could not long sustain the strain which war would throw upon it.

The necessity of making some changes in order to remedy the grave defects which at present exist in our cavalry organisation has, during the past few years, from time to time occupied the attention of the War Office. Mr. Childers, in introducing the army estimates in March 1882, said that in the course of the year it would be necessary to make some proposals for the reorganisation of the cavalry branch of the service. It may be said briefly that 5 alternatives

[1] Vide *Cavalry Tactics*, p. 257. As has just been shown, this is not quite correct, as the number of squadrons in Continental cavalry regiments varies.

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for effecting this object were open to the authorities, which may be enumerated as follows :—

Firstly, to leave the present regimental system intact, but to increase the depot. This would necessarily have involved an increase of numbers and expense, and this objection was held to be fatal.

The 2nd was to reduce the number of regiments and to strengthen the remainder either by making the 4 squadrons stronger than at present, or by the addition of a 5th squadron. But though this measure would have been an excellent one for the regiments which were thus strengthened, the sacrifices by which it would have been attained were too great.

Apart from the fact that there is not at present a single cavalry regiment too much in the British army for the duties it has to perform, the War Minister naturally for other reasons regarded with reluctance a measure which would have been so unpopular, and which must necessarily have involved so much hardship and ruin of professional prospects to many officers. This project was therefore put aside.

For the consideration of the 3rd and 4th alternatives a committee of experienced cavalry officers was appointed in the spring of 1882. This committee did not hesitate to reject the 3rd alternative, viz. the attachment to a depot at home of a regiment abroad, inasmuch as it had already been tried and had signally failed, mainly owing to the absence of any bond of union or common interest between the regiment and the depot attached to it.

With regard to the 4th proposal, viz. the grouping of regiments in brigades of 3, the committee did not conceal their apprehension that such a plan would be found defective in many points. It would, for instance, reduce half the regiments at home to a state of comparative inefficiency, and the feeling between the officers and men of the 3 constituent parts would never amount to that strong sentiment which is so desirable in a homogeneous body. The committee recommended that the officers should not be compulsorily interchangeable, and that the present name,

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number, uniform, and traditions of each regiment should be preserved.

A proposal tempered by such serious qualifications as these was not likely to be accepted as a settlement, and, as might have been expected, it never reached the stage of official adoption. As 4 out of the 5 possible alternatives had thus come to nothing, an idea was for a time entertained of meeting the difficulty with regard to providing regiments in India with reinforcements by increasing the strength of each regimental depot by some 60 or 70 men, establishing a second cavalry depot, and, as a set-off to the increased expense thus occasioned, disbanding 1 of the cavalry regiments at home. Such a measure would have been a makeshift which would have only in a small degree palliated the evils inherent in our present organisation. It has from the first been evident that any real reorganisation must be based upon far more extended considerations than the mere supply of an adequate annual draft to the 9 cavalry regiments in India.

The 5th alternative remains to be considered, viz. to form the 28 cavalry regiments of the Line into double regiments in the model of our infantry organisation.

If this plan were adopted it has been proposed that the 28 cavalry regiments of the Line should be formed into half that number of corps with 2 wings, each with 1 name and uniform ; that the officers, men, and horses should be thoroughly interchangeable, so that out of the two joined corps we could always and at a moment's notice produce and continuously sustain a compact and efficient regiment either for service in India or in any part of the world where their services may be required.

Such a proposal as this, which has been gravely put forward as the only feasible solution of this question, may well be deemed a startling one. It needs indeed a very slight knowledge of the British cavalry, and also of the history of the British army during the past decade, to see at once that the objections to it are too grave, and so fatal that any War Minister might well pause before committing

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himself and the country to such a scheme as this. Indeed, it would not be hard to show that the results of such a scheme, if carried out, would mean utter destruction of efficiency for the cavalry. In that arm of the service it is even more needful than in the infantry that officers should know their men and be known by them, because cavalry has ordinarily to work in far smaller detachments than infantry. What, then, would be the efficiency of the regiments going to the front with the squadrons filled up to a great extent, on the eve of embarkation, with men and horses whom the officers had never seen before, and whose character and qualifications were unknown to them? Such corps may do well enough at a pinch on a campaign of short duration against foes who could scarcely be considered very formidable, but in European warfare they would probably be found inferior in many ways to the enemy they were called upon to meet. The efficiency of the home regiment would be no less impaired, inasmuch as it would be destroyed as an effective unit, and would be quite unfit to take the field if afterwards called upon to do so. In other words, one-half of the English cavalry would be destroyed as regiments and turned into mere depots. These depots, moreover, would be of the most expensive kind, because the officers and the staff of a whole regiment would be maintained to keep them going. If this is to be done it would surely be simpler to admit at once that one-half of the cavalry is a mere sham and had better be abolished.

Having thus passed in review the different alternatives which are open, and the several proposals which have been made, it may be asked, On what lines is it most desirable that the reorganisation of our cavalry should be based? Before coming to a decision upon this difficult matter it may be as well to note one or two points which may be held to be indisputable, and which should therefore be kept clearly in view. These points may be enumerated as follows, viz.:—

Firstly, that an efficient organisation will necessarily cost more than a faulty one, which breaks down as soon as it is put to the test. In this as in other financial matters no

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amount of official ingenuity will give the country something for nothing.

Secondly, that no reorganisation will save us from constantly recurring difficulties which ignores or endeavours to put aside the regimental system, or which fails to recognise the fact that a cavalry corps must be an effective unit in modern warfare, consisting of drilled and thoroughly effective soldiers.

Thirdly, that with regard to the question of expense no organisation can really be more costly to the country than that which now exists, inasmuch as at present a number of cavalry regiments are maintained a at large annual cost to the country, with an organisation which is not well adapted even for the current requirements of peace time, which is not organised for war, and which, as everyone knows, could not bear the stress and the strain which an active campaign of 3 months or so would throw upon it.

Even if these points are granted a satisfactory settlement of the question is beset with difficulties of every kind. Nevertheless, taking everything into consideration, there can, I think, be but little doubt as to the direction which any reorganisation of the Line cavalry, even though it be only a partial one, should take, viz. the formation of some at any rate of our cavalry corps on the Continental model of 4 effective and 1 depot squadron. If this much can be secured it is to be feared that we must do without the establishment of the squadron of the administrative as well as the tactical unit. Desirable as this reform would be for many reasons, it is not easy to see how, under existing circumstances, it could be carried out. Were our cavalry regiments thus formed of 5 squadrons, in the Continental model, only 5 squadron commanders would be required. Hence the 3 junior troop captains in every corps would be left without any independent command, and would in fact be virtually deprived of their troops, perhaps after having held them for some years. This would naturally be very keenly felt, and such a measure could not be carried out without great hardship and injustice to all the regimental

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officers concerned, of whom there would be a considerable number.

With regard to the expense that this addition to all our cavalry regiments would inevitably involve, it is perhaps scarcely likely that any War Minister would propose, or that Parliament would sanction, so large an addition to the estimates as this measure would involve. This being so, the War Office authorities are perhaps adopting the wisest course in allowing the organisation of the cavalry, in spite of all its ill effects, to remain as it is rather than to adopt changes in its organisation which could have no good result and which are not in any way suited to the requirements of the case.

It may, however, be suggested that if only a certain number of our cavalry regiments—say 10 or so—were thus strengthened it would be a great point gained. It is only very rarely—i.e. perhaps 3 or 4 times during a century—that we require a large cavalry force to take the field for a campaign in Europe. The occasions, however, on which we require a small force of a few regiments to do so for one of our petty wars may be in the future, as they have been in the past, frequent enough. If some of them were organised on a sound footing and maintained ready for war there would be less chance of the chaos and disorganisation into which the cavalry was thrown when 4 or 5 efficient regiments had to be furnished for the Egyptian campaign.

If we can only have a partial reform of the organisation of our regiments, at least let that reform be in the right direction, instead of adopting measures which will only land us in fresh difficulties and render it harder and more impossible than ever to retrace our steps and adopt a sound system. The course here advocated would be no new and hazardous experiment, but a simple and intelligible reform, and in imitating our Continental neighbours in this matter we should at any rate be on perfectly safe ground. If there were any practical method of having an effective cavalry force ready at any time to take the field, without incurring the heavy cost of its maintenance during long years of peace, we

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may rest assured that the great military Powers of Europe, whose burdens are so much heavier than ours, and who study economy in every way in their military expenditure, would long ago have found it out and put it into force. The fact that they have not done so, but are forced to keep their cavalry regiments always ready to take the field, should be proof enough to anyone that no such method exists.

In conclusion it may be repeated that the effects of the simple measure which has been here suggested, though by no means free from objections, would, as regards the efficiency of cavalry regiments taking the field, be *certain*. As to the effects of most of the other plans which have been proposed, and especially of the scheme which has been gravely put forward of imitating our infantry organisation,[1] there is only one thing *certain*, viz. that if they are ever really put into practice the last state of the British cavalry will be worse than the first.

The following official return shows the establishments of the British cavalry regiments for the year 1883–4. This return was issued with special army circulars, dated May 21, 1883.

'The following establishments will take effect from April 1, 1883 :—

'ESTABLISHMENTS OF THE CAVALRY.

'*Household Cavalry.*

Ranks	1st Life Guards	2nd Life Guards	Royal Horse Guards	Total
Lieutenant-colonels	2	2	2	6
Majors	3	3	3	9
Captains	5	5	5	15
Lieutenants	11	11	11	33
Adjutant	1	1	1	3
Carried forward . .	22	22	22	66

[1] It is strange that anyone should propose to extend to the cavalry an organisation which notoriously gives the country so little and costs it so much.

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'*Household Cavalry*—continued.

Ranks	1st Life Guards	2nd Life Guards	Royal Horse Guards	Total
Brought forward . .	22	22	22	66
Quartermaster	1	1	1	3
Riding master	1	1	1	3
Surgeon-major	1	1	1	3
Surgeon	1	1	1	3
Total officers . .	26	26	26	78
Warrant officers } Regimental corporal-major .	1	1	1	3
Warrant officers } Bandmaster	1	1	1	3
Quartermaster corporal-major . .	1	1	1	3
Armourer corporal . . .	1	1	1	3
Corporal instructor in fencing . .	1	1	1	3
Saddler corporal	1	1	1	3
Orderly-room corporal	1	1	1	3
Paymaster corporal	1	1	1	3
Farrier quartermaster corporal . .	1	1	1	3
Troop corporal-majors	8	8	8	24
Corporal trumpeter	1	1	1	3
Corporal cook	1	1	1	3
Corporals of horse	29	29	29	87
Corporal farriers	8	8	8	24
Total sergeants . .	54	54	54	162
Trumpeters	7	7	7	21
Kettle drummer	1	1	1	3
Total trumpeters, &c. .	8	8	8	24
Corporals	16	16	16	48
Shoeing smiths	8	8	8	24
Saddlers	2	2	2	6
Saddletree maker	1	1	1	3
Privates	316	316	316	948
Total rank and file .	343	343	343	1,029
Total all ranks . .	433	433	433	1,299
Troop horses . .	275	275	275	825

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'*Cavalry of*

Regiments	Where Stationed	Lieutenant-Colonels	Majors	Captains	Lieutenants	Adjutant	Riding Master	Quartermaster	Total Officers	Warrant Officers: Regimental Sergeant-Major	Warrant Officers: Bandmaster	Quartermaster Sergeant	Sergeant Trumpeter	Sergeant Instructor in Fencing
1st Dragoon Guards	I	2	3	3	11	1	1	1	22	1	1	1	1	1
Depot.	H	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—
2nd Dragoon Guards	H	2	3	5	11	1	1	1	24	1	1	1	1	1
3rd " "	H	2	3	5	11	1	1	1	24	1	1	1	1	1
4th " "	H	2	3	5	11	1	1	1	24	1	1	1	1	1
5th " "	H	2	3	5	11	1	1	1	24	1	1	1	1	1
6th " "	I	2	3	3	11	1	1	1	22	1	1	1	1	1
Depot.	H	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—
7th Dragoon Guards	H	2	3	5	11	1	1	1	24	1	1	1	1	1
1st Dragoons	H	2	3	5	11	1	1	1	24	1	1	1	1	1
2nd "	H	2	3	5	11	1	1	1	24	1	1	1	1	1
3rd Hussars	H	2	3	5	11	1	1	1	24	1	1	1	1	1
4th "	H	2	3	5	11	1	1	1	24	1	1	1	1	1
5th Lancers	H	2	3	5	11	1	1	1	24	1	1	1	1	1
6th Dragoons	C	2	3	4	10	1	1	1	22	1	1	1	1	1
Depot.	H	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—
7th Hussars	H	2	3	5	11	1	1	1	24	1	1	1	1	1
8th "	I	2	3	3	11	1	1	1	22	1	1	1	1	1
Depot.	H	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—
9th Lancers	I	2	3	3	11	1	1	1	22	1	1	1	1	1
Depot.	H	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—
10th Hussars	I	2	3	3	11	1	1	1	22	1	1	1	1	1
Depot.	H	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—
11th Hussars	H	2	3	5	11	1	1	1	24	1	1	1	1	1
12th Lancers	I	2	3	3	11	1	1	1	22	1	1	1	1	1
Depot.	H	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—
13th Hussars	I	2	3	3	11	1	1	1	22	1	1	1	1	1
Depot.	H	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—
14th Hussars	I	2	3	3	11	1	1	1	22	1	1	1	1	1
Depot.	H	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—
15th Hussars	H	2	3	5	11	1	1	1	24	1	1	1	1	1
16th Lancers	H	2	3	5	11	1	1	1	24	1	1	1	1	1
17th "	I	2	3	3	11	1	1	1	22	1	1	1	1	1
Depot.	H	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—
18th Hussars	H	2	3	5	11	1	1	1	24	1	1	1	1	1
19th "	E	2	3	4	10	1	1	1	22	1	1	1	1	1
Depot.	H	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—
20th Hussars	H	2	3	5	11	1	1	1	24	1	1	1	1	1
21st "	H	2	3	5	11	1	1	1	24	1	1	1	1	1
Staff of cavalry depot	H	[1]3	[2]1	—	—	1	1	1	7	1	1	1	—	—
Mounted police.	H	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2	1	—	1	—	—
Total.	—	59	85	131	317	29	29	31	681	30	29	30	28	28

[1] Including 2 inspectors of auxiliary cavalry.
[2] Superintendent of riding establishment.

'NOTE.—In the case of regiments on the Indian establishment one of the majors of

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the Line.

Paymaster Sergeant	Armourer Sergeant	Saddler Sergeant	Farrier Quartermaster Sergeant	Orderly-Room Sergeant	Troop Sergeant-Majors	Sergeant Cook	Sergeants	Sergeant Farriers	Total Sergeants	Trumpeters	Corporals	Shoeing Smiths	Saddlers	Saddletree Maker and Wheeler	Privates	Total Rank and File	Total all Ranks	Troop Horses
1	1	1	1	1	6	—	18	6	38	6	24	—	—	—	384	408	476	396
—	—	—	—	—	1	—	3	—	4	1	3	1	—	—	86	90	97	20
1	1	1	1	1	8	1	24	8	49	8	32	8	3	1	366	410	493	300
1	1	1	1	1	8	1	24	8	49	8	32	8	3	1	366	410	493	300
1	1	1	1	1	8	1	24	8	49	8	32	8	3	1	366	410	493	300
1	1	1	1	1	8	1	24	8	49	8	32	8	3	1	498	542	625	400
1	1	1	1	1	6	—	18	6	38	6	24	—	—	—	384	408	476	396
—	—	—	—	—	1	—	3	—	4	1	3	1	—	—	86	90	97	20
1	1	1	1	1	8	1	24	8	49	8	32	8	3	1	498	542	625	400
1	1	1	1	1	8	1	24	8	49	8	32	8	3	1	498	542	625	400
1	1	1	1	1	8	1	24	8	49	8	32	8	3	1	366	413	493	300
1	1	1	1	1	8	1	24	8	49	[3]9	32	8	3	1	366	410	494	301
1	1	1	1	1	8	1	24	8	49	8	32	8	3	1	366	410	493	300
1	1	1	1	1	8	1	24	8	49	8	32	8	3	1	366	410	493	300
1	1	1	1	1	7	1	21	7	44	7	28	7	3	1	383	422	497	380
—	—	—	—	—	1	—	3	1	5	1	4	1	—	—	115	120	128	20
1	1	1	1	1	8	1	24	7	49	[3]8	32	8	3	1	366	410	493	300
1	1	1	1	1	6	—	18	6	38	6	24	—	—	—	384	408	476	396
—	—	—	—	—	1	—	3	—	4	1	3	1	—	—	86	90	97	20
1	1	1	1	1	6	—	18	6	38	6	24	—	—	—	384	408	476	396
—	—	—	—	—	1	—	3	—	4	1	3	1	—	—	86	90	97	20
1	1	1	1	1	6	—	18	6	38	6	24	—	—	—	384	408	476	396
—	—	—	—	—	1	—	3	—	4	1	3	1	—	—	86	90	97	20
1	1	1	1	1	8	1	24	8	49	8	32	8	3	1	366	410	493	300
1	1	1	1	1	6	—	18	6	38	6	24	—	—	—	384	408	476	396
—	—	—	—	—	1	—	3	—	4	1	3	1	—	—	86	90	97	20
1	1	1	1	1	6	—	18	6	38	6	24	—	—	—	384	408	476	396
—	—	—	—	—	1	—	3	—	4	1	3	1	—	—	86	90	97	20
1	1	1	1	1	8	1	24	8	49	8	32	8	3	1	366	410	493	300
1	1	1	1	1	8	1	24	8	49	8	32	8	3	1	366	410	493	300
1	1	1	1	1	6	—	18	6	38	6	24	—	—	—	384	408	476	396
—	—	—	—	—	1	—	3	—	4	1	3	1	—	—	86	90	87	20
1	1	1	1	1	8	1	24	8	49	8	32	8	3	1	366	410	493	300
1	1	1	1	1	7	1	21	7	44	7	28	7	3	1	383	422	497	380
—	—	—	—	—	1	—	3	1	5	1	4	1	—	—	115	120	128	20
1	1	1	1	1	8	1	24	8	49	8	32	8	3	1	498	542	625	400
1	1	1	1	1	8	1	24	8	49	8	32	8	3	1	366	410	493	300
1	1	1	1	2	—	1	2	—	10	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	20	20
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	—	7	—	13	—	—	—	54	67	77	76
29	29	29	29	30	215	20	653	206	1,326	216	864	161	57	20	12,030	13,132	15,414	10,141

[3] Including 1 kettle drummer.

the regiment may serve at the depot instead of the captain shown in the above table.'

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CHAPTER III.

RETROSPECTIVE SURVEY OF EMPLOYMENT OF CAVALRY.

Cavalry cannot be improvised—Strong and well-appointed bodies of it essential to the successful conduct of a campaign — Cavalry evidently expected to play an important rôle in future campaigns —Cavalry employed strategically in Napoleonic wars—Used again in this manner in American Civil War—Employment of cavalry in the Austro-Prussian campaign of 1866—Use which was made of the German cavalry in Franco-German war—Gradual manner in which the Germans realised, step by step, how their cavalry could be used—Development of enterprise and boldness of the German cavalry—General nature of the duties which the cavalry had to perform during the campaign—Russo-Turkish campaign of 1877–8 —Manner in which Russian cavalry was employed—Gourko's raid across the Balkans in 1877—British cavalry in Afghan and Zulu campaigns — Results achieved by British cavalry in Egyptian campaign of 1882.

A PERUSAL of the first chapter will serve to show what vast hosts of cavalry the great military Powers of Europe think it necessary to maintain ever ready to be put at a moment's notice into the field in case their services may, by an outbreak of war, be required. The fact that these large bodies of cavalry are thus ever maintained almost at full strength during time of peace, and at an enormous pecuniary cost, serves conclusively to prove that the Powers are unanimously agreed upon two points—viz. that cavalry is an arm which cannot be hastily improvised, and that strong and well-appointed bodies of it are essential to the successful conduct of a campaign. This twofold necessity of maintaining a numerically sufficient body of cavalry, and also of having

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a sound organisation which should enable it at once to take the field on the outbreak of war, is a matter upon which too much stress cannot be laid, and it is to be hoped that such an organisation will some day become a reality instead of merely a desideratum in our own army.

As it is evidently thought by the leaders of Continental armies that the cavalry is destined to play a most important part in future European campaigns, it will be as well, before going further, to take a cursory glance at the manner in which it has been employed during the campaigns of the last 25 years or so, and to see both what it has done and what it has failed to do.

That the strategic use of cavalry was to a certain degree recognised and practised during the Napoleonic wars at the beginning of this century there is ample evidence to show; but in the long interval of European peace which succeeded the overthrow of Napoleon the traditions of how cavalry was wont to be used in this fashion seem to have passed out of ken, so that not only the practice, but even the very idea of thus utilising the cavalry arm had fallen into abeyance both in Europe and elsewhere. It was the American Civil War (1861–5) which was destined to draw the attention of the military world to this subject anew. Though in point of fact the American cavalry which was employed on both sides was hastily improvised, and was a rough and ready force which from the highly trained European standard could, perhaps, hardly be called cavalry at all, but rather mounted infantry, yet the services which it rendered on both sides has caused the American Civil War to be looked upon as a turning point, or the beginning of a new chapter in the history of what cavalry may be trained to achieve.

The American cavalry distinguished itself above all by distant expeditions (raids), directed especially against the enemy's line of communication. The results of the method of warfare which they practised would probably have often been very different if a solid and highly trained cavalry had existed on either side, which could have been employed against its opponent's hastily improvised bodies of horse.

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Following closely upon the termination of the American Civil War came the war between Austria and Prussia in 1866. In the six weeks' campaign which followed there were numerous instances of combats between larger or smaller bodies of cavalry, but it can hardly be said that the cavalry on either side gained any successes which materially influenced the general issue of the campaign. Certainly neither the Prussian nor the Austrian cavalry rendered any such services to its own side as those which the German cavalry performed a few years later in the Franco-German campaign of 1870, and which gained for the latter cavalry such wide renown.

The short campaign of 1866 was, however, productive of one important result to the Prussian cavalry. As the campaign went on, the Prussian commanders began to open their eyes to the mistake which had been made in allowing their cavalry at first to play so passive a part, and to get an insight into the advantages which in future might be secured by making a bolder use of the hosts of horse at their command. In order to show clearly that this was so it will be as well to contrast the manner in which the cavalry was handled at the opening and towards the end of the campaign.

In 1866 the Prussians formed only a small number of bodies of cavalry to be used strategically. A single cavalry division had been attached to the army concentrated in Silesia for the purpose of crossing the mountains of Glatz, Braunau, and Landshut, to penetrate into Bohemia. It marched in *rear* of the corps d'armée which was destined eventually to debouch from the defile of Landshut and to march on Trautenau. The other army, which, coming from Görlitz, was meant to march to the Iser at Reichenberg, had two cavalry divisions. This cavalry had also received the order to remain in rear of the front of operations. The commanders of these two armies both thought it better for the cavalry to wait, till not only the mountains but also the region intersected by numerous defiles which extended along the Upper Elbe and the Iser had been crossed, before being pushed forward. As a matter of fact, however, they were

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never pushed forward in advance of the columns in order to find and maintain contact with the enemy till after the battle of Königgratz.

From this moment the old method of keeping the cavalry in rear of the armies was abandoned, and the great bodies of cavalry remained constantly in advance of the main body of the army. It may be remarked, however, that these masses of cavalry did not in this campaign carry out to any great extent the duties which had so late in the campaign been assigned to them.

In consequence of the experience which had been acquired in 1866 the ideas of the Germans as to the method in which the cavalry should be made use of were, at the opening of the Franco-German campaign, far more fixed and advanced than heretofore. Everyone knows that the French knew nothing of how to utilise their cavalry for the purpose of scouting and reconnaissance, for concealing the movements of their own army, and for gaining intelligence of those of their foes. Enough has long ago been written upon this subject, and the incredible negligence of the French to provide even for their own security, and the disasters which this negligence entailed, have long ago passed into the domain of history.

It would, however, be a mistake to suppose that the experiences and knowledge which had been gained by the Prussians in the campaign of 1866 of the advantages to be derived from a bold use of their cavalry were at once utilised, even by the German cavalry, at the outset of the Franco-German campaign. Their cavalry regiments were not pushed forward at once on the declaration of war (as they certainly would be in the next war which any of the great Powers wage with each other) 2 or 3 days in advance of the armies which followed in their track.

There were various reasons which prevented this being done. The chief of them, however, was this: The German commanders attached a capital importance to not being disturbed or harassed by the enemy in the railway debarkation and concentration of their forces on the French frontier,

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and it was to this point that all their energies were bent. It was not their policy, therefore, to afford their adversaries, who had already massed considerable forces on the frontier, any opportunity for gaining partial successes, such as might easily have been obtained over their own isolated bodies of cavalry before the mass of the German forces were ready to assume the offensive. They therefore left in first line only a thin cordon of troops which was just sufficient to watch and observe the enemy as soon as he showed himself, and which were directed to maintain a defensive attitude. Under these circumstances there was evidently then no scope for the enterprise of the cavalry. It was clear that they could not undertake any expedition which entailed going to any distance, and that all idea of making any raids into the interior with the object of destroying the enemy's railways and thus harassing and delaying the concentration of his troops must be abandoned. Even if it had been wished to adopt such a line of action it is doubtful if it would have been possible for the Germans in the early part of the campaign to have carried it out, as their cavalry was not ready so to act. Indeed, the French had at this time a body of cavalry on the frontier far superior to any which the Germans could show. However this may be, as a matter of fact there is no doubt that the corps assigned for the formation of cavalry divisions effected their mobilisation methodically, were not set in motion sooner than the corps d'armée to which they belonged in time of peace, and that the divisions were only definitely organised after the troops had taken the field. The permanent divisions of cavalry already organised in time of peace (like those of the Guard and one or two others) were also in like manner sent to the frontier with their corps d'armée, and no steps were taken in the early days of the campaign to push any of the cavalry corps forward in advance of the main armies to which they belonged. The order for the mobilisation of the army of North Germany had only been issued 9 days when the French had already on the frontier 3 considerable corps d'armée,

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with an equal number of cavalry divisions.[1] At this moment all the German frontier along the Sarre and the Rhenish Palatinate, an extent of 29 German miles, was watched by only 3 regiments of cavalry and 3 brigades of infantry. It was not till July 30 that 2 cavalry divisions, comprising 56 squadrons, who were intended to protect the deployment of the 2nd army on the Sarre, and had been detrained at Bingen, Kreuznach, and Mannheim, were put in motion. It was not till 16 days after the order for mobilisation (August 3) that the cavalry of the 2nd army attempted to gain contact with the enemy along the line of the Sarre from Saarbrück to Bitche. The 6 corps d'armée of the 2nd army, which followed the cavalry in 2 échelons, were intended, according to the orders issued, to advance on August 8 (i.e. the 21st day after the order for the mobilisation had been given) behind the screen which had now, and not till now, been formed by the cavalry. As is well known, the events which brought on in such an unexpected fashion the battle of August 6 at Spicheren somewhat deranged these dispositions.

If the 2nd army did not employ its masses of cavalry till it was ready to deploy all its forces in a methodical manner, this was no less the case with the 3rd army in its movement towards Alsace from the line of Landau-Germersheim to beyond the Lauter.

As in 1866, the divisional cavalry of the 3rd German army was alone charged at the opening of the campaign of 1870 with the task of performing the reconnaissance and scouting duties for the different columns. With regard to the 2 cavalry divisions which were attached to the 3rd army, 1 was at this time being organised in rear. The other one was ready, but it was placed in rear of the front of operations till the end of the battle of Wissemburg, which took place on the 1st day of the 3rd army's forward march. It was then called to the front to go and explore and reconnoitre in the direction of Hagenau and Wörth-Reichshoffen.

In the same manner also the 1st army at the outset of

[1] See Map I.

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the campaign deemed itself able to do without the presence of its 2 cavalry divisions in front of the line of operations. It was not till some days after the battle of Spicheren that the latter received the order to go in direct pursuit of the French, then in retreat towards Metz, and while the 2nd army was executing its famous turning movement by Pont-à-Mousson, the 1st army was directed by the German head-quarters to push forward its cavalry divisions in advance of its wings.

It will be seen from this brief recital of facts that the epoch which was so brilliant and glorious for the German cavalry, and which covered it with such wide renown, began for the 2nd army on the Sarre soon after the victory at Spicheren, for the 1st army a few days later than this, and for the 3rd army after the battle of Wörth and the passage of the Vosges. Thus at length the German cavalry took up and continued to carry out the task and to play the part which is by common consent peculiarly that of the cavalry arm. Thenceforth throughout the Franco-German campaign the German cavalry divisions were always to be found well in advance, and acted literally as the eyes and ears of the respective armies to which they belonged. For the future neither vast forests nor mountains were any obstacle to its commanders; the large bodies of cavalry were movable enough and enterprising enough to be fully equal to their task, viz. that of gaining intelligence of the movements and intentions of the enemy and of providing for the security of their own forces over the whole theatre of operations. It is true that subsequently in the campaign on the Loire the cavalry had to halt, in the beginning of November 1870, before the forest of Marchenoir, and at the end of the same month before that of Orleans; but it was not the wooded nature of the country which forced it so to act. The fact was that the forest was strongly occupied by the enemy's infantry, and hence it was impossible for the cavalry to penetrate it without being committed to serious conflicts.

The instructions which were unceasingly repeated from the German head-quarters, 'The cavalry far in advance,' the

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considerable results often obtained by even the smallest officer's patrol, the feeling of superiority which sprang up in all ranks and grades, the dismay which a few horsemen caused among the population of a large town, the success which crowned every sort of temerity—all these causes co-operated to make the German cavalry more enterprising than perhaps it had ever been before. It was only at the end of the war, when the francs-tireurs were everywhere organised, that the cavalry thought of prudence.[1]

It will be well, however, before closing this cursory account of the feats of the German cavalry, to see a little more closely what was the nature of the work which they performed during the campaign.

The 56 squadrons of the 5th and 6th divisions of the 3rd army were not sufficient for the ever-increasingly arduous task which had been assigned to them. While the different columns marched by parallel routes from the valley of the Sarre towards the passages over the Moselle to Novéant, Pont à Mousson, Dieulouard, the reconnoitring cavalry with a portion of its forces had to watch closely the environs of Metz, and with the rest to search the region between that place and Verdun, and to harass and to seek to fall upon the rear of its adversary's army.

In addition to these duties of scouting and reconnaissance which thus devolved upon the cavalry there soon came to be added another. It was necessary for it to cover the deployment of the army in the country through which the Moselle flows above Metz, to gain possession as quickly as possible of the points of passage over that river, to render useless the railway situated beyond it, by means of which the French army of the Rhine was receiving at that time important reinforcements, to observe the country towards Toul and Nancy, and finally to stretch out a hand southwards towards the 3rd army.

In order to fulfil these requirements 2 cavalry divisions

[1] *Manuel de la Conduite des Troupes*, par Cardinal v. Widdern, vol. iii. p. 11. I must acknowledge my indebtedness to this writer for much of the contents of this chapter.

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(those of the Guard and the 12th corps) which had hitherto been retained in rear were soon sent forward to the front, so that for some days there were no less than 96 squadrons in front of the 2nd army, which formed an impenetrable screen and concealed all movements from the French, who were astonished to see the German columns only 10 days after Spicheren appear on the plateau of Vionville, one day's march west of Metz.

In the same manner the 3rd army, after having crossed the Vosges, constantly employed its 2 cavalry divisions, 1 in the front of operations, the other towards the south to protect its left flank.

During the critical days of the battle of Sedan 5 cavalry divisions—viz. the 4th, 5th, 6th, and 12th, and the division of the Guard—were employed in looking for the army of Macmahon, which they forced to halt. The 2nd cavalry division, which came from the extreme left wing and advanced towards Sedan, was also charged to make explorations which had for their object to guard the left flank of its army.

In the subsequent course of the campaign of 1870–1 the greater part of the German cavalry divisions was employed in guarding the rear of the armies which were investing Paris. At a later period, however, they acted independently in front and on the flanks of the German armies, which were intended to act against the French forces which were formed to raise the blockade.

In conclusion, before taking leave of the German cavalry during the Franco-German campaign, it will be as well to bear in mind that it would be rash in forming an opinion upon the practical results which the cavalry arm, employed strategically, is capable of effecting to base that opinion solely upon what the German cavalry in the campaign of 1870–1 were able to do. The signal services which that cavalry was able to render to the chiefs of the German army would, it is hardly necessary to say, have naturally been much diminished if the French had understood how to make use of their cavalry with any intelligence at all. Moreover, after the catastrophes of Wörth, Sedan, and Metz the bodies of

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cavalry at the disposal of the French were, from inferior numbers, totally powerless to act against the German masses of cavalry employed in reconnaissance and scouting, even supposing that they had been trained and well-instructed troops.

In the Russo-Turkish campaign of 1877–8 the Russian cavalry, which comprised 11 divisions and also 11 regiments not formed into divisions, was almost as much favoured as the German cavalry in 1870 by circumstances which permitted it to gain strategical successes over its adversaries, for it had the advantage of being pitted against a cavalry which was inferior to itself in every way.

The tasks which in this campaign devolved upon the Russian cavalry were very varied. Thus at the beginning of the operations the cavalry of the left wing was charged to protect without delay, at the mouth of the Danube, the concentration of the army which had just crossed the Pruth for the purpose of entering Roumania. On this occasion a regiment received orders to gain possession, by a forced march, of the railway bridge of Barbossi, near Braïla, a strategic point of the greatest importance, and to prevent its occupation by the enemy, who with a very little trouble could have effected its immediate destruction.

During the march across Roumania in order to reach the Danube the cavalry divisions covering the movements for the concentration of the army were divided in such a manner that it was impossible to guess to what corps d'armée any regiment belonged.

Subsequently the cavalry was entrusted all along the line of the Danube with the surveillance of the banks until the day fixed for the crossing of the river. Again at Sistova, and above all at Braïla, it had to protect the successive deployments of the Russian troops on the right bank of the Danube. It seems, however, that during the first days of the passage of the river at Sistova by the main army the screen of cavalry was too weak, and that it was some time before scouting and reconnaissance was pushed far enough.

With regard to the employment of the cavalry divisions

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of the main army immediately after their deployment on the right bank of the Danube we see that 3 of these divisions advanced from Sistova and crossed the Jantra, in order to find the main body of the enemy, which was supposed to be marching in that direction. It was intended by this means to cover the deployment of the army commanded by the then Heir Apparent. At the same time an advanced guard corps, composed principally of bodies of cavalry, was to march by Tirnova towards the Balkans, and to cross them without delay by a defile reported to be impracticable and left undefended by any force of the enemy. The protection of the flanks of the army was entrusted for the most part merely to a brigade of Cossacks, and even this brigade received no orders to reconnoitre to a distance. The Russian head-quarters had reason bitterly to lament this negligence, inasmuch as the sudden apparition of the Turkish army from Widdin, under the command of Osman Pasha, on the lower Vid, near Plevna, was such a surprise that it produced an utter stagnation in the operations in the general theatre of the war.

At the time of his first passage of the Balkans, and during the offensive operations which followed, General Gourko, with the cavalry of the advanced guard corps, accomplished all that it was humanly possible to do. After one of the most arduous marches across the mountains, which was made by making use of footpaths, and which lasted no less than two days, he succeeded in taking the troops who occupied the defile of Shipka in reverse, and caused them to retire without awaiting his attack. Then immediately, with unparalleled boldness, Gourko proceeded towards the south, in order to destroy at different points the railway which connects Jamboli with Philippopolis, to rouse up the Bulgarian population of the valleys of the Tundja and the Maritza, to drive off the Turkish troops, of whom, according to his calculations, only a small number were to be found between the Balkans and Adrianople, and, in a word, to spread disquietude and terror wherever he went.

This expedition beyond the Balkans was regarded by

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many soldiers as an injudicious enterprise from a strategical point of view, inasmuch as the sudden apparition of Osman Pasha at Plevna, on the right flank of the Russian army, and his rapid and unexpected concentration of considerable forces, which was carried into effect by the Turks to the north of Adrianople by the help of the fleet and the railways, compelled the Russians to renounce for a time all idea of any offensive operations beyond the Balkans, and to stand for a time entirely upon the defensive. Notwithstanding all this, however, the idea of sending out without hesitation a considerable force of cavalry, and of entrusting to it the strategical task which has just been mentioned, was in itself an excellent one.

Then came the catastrophe of Plevna. Osman Pasha had succeeded in maintaining his position on the right flank of the army of invasion. In a wonderfully short space of time he contrived to surround himself with improvised entrenchments of such extent that it was impossible for the Russo-Roumanian army completely to invest them. Under these circumstances the Russian cavalry posted on Osman's lines of communication with Sophia and with the regions to the west had to carry out that kind of duties which a German cavalry force preceding an army of invasion might one day be called upon to carry out on French territory.

The Russian head-quarters attached numerous bodies of cavalry to the army charged with the investment of Plevna. When it was decided that this army should begin the attack of the forces of the entrenched camp on the right bank of the Vid, several cavalry divisions were sent to the left bank of this river, so that in the event of the assault being successful the retreat of the Turks on Sophia might be hindered or cut off, and also to aid the Russian columns told off for the pursuit of the enemy to regain contact with him.

The assault, however, having been unsuccessful, a new task then devolved upon the cavalry. It had to occupy the zone of country in front of those sides of Plevna which were not invested, in order to prevent, or at any rate to render very difficult, the arrival of Turkish reinforcements

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and supplies to the entrenched camp from Sophia and other regions. The Russian officer who was given the command of the 50 squadrons and 30 guns which were detached for this purpose was scarcely the man for his work, and consequently the cavalry under him made but little of such opportunities of action as it had, and failed to prevent supplies from reaching the Turkish camp.

Subsequently cavalry detachments of even greater strength than this had to carry out another duty—i.e. as soon as the Russians had succeeded in completely investing Osman Pasha in his position at Plevna. It was necessary then to take measures to assure the safety of the rear of the Russian troops employed in blockading Plevna towards the west, and to endeavour to free the country west of Plevna from detachments of the Turkish forces, and to utilise the general resources of the country for the support of the blockading army.

At length Plevna capitulated. The large army which had been employed in the investment of the place now became available, and it then became possible to think of crossing the Balkans.

In spite of the numerous difficulties which this enterprise presented there was no waiting on the part of the Russians for their infantry to take up positions beyond the Balkans before risking their cavalry in the hazardous passage of this mountain range. On the contrary, a great portion of the cavalry had, simultaneously with the infantry columns, to traverse heights covered with snow and frozen ice, so that in case of success they might be immediately available for scouting and reconnaissance, and also be ready to cover the deployment of the columns and to cut off at once the line of retreat of those Turkish troops whom it was hoped to surround in the defiles. It was only by untiring energy and perseverance that the difficulties of this march were overcome by the Russian cavalry. The failure of the attempt which was made with the object of surrounding the Turkish troops who were barring the defile of Arab-Konak General Gourko attributed to his cavalry being unable, when they reached the other side of the Balkans, to overcome the obstacles which blocked

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the roads and communications, and which were rendered still more impassable by masses of snow.

The strategical tasks which devolved upon the Russian cavalry beyond the Balkans it is not necessary to examine here in detail. It will suffice to say that they consisted chiefly in the search and pursuit of the only Turkish army which still kept the field, and in driving it from its line of retreat. While engaged in performing these services no fewer than 52 guns fell into the hands of the Cossacks.

In consequence of the purely defensive rôle which was imposed (outside the principal zone of operations of the theatre of war) on the Russian corps operating on the Dobrudscha, the cavalry had to support all alone the weight of the campaign on this part of the Ottoman territory. There, in fact, were to be seen Cossacks, dragoons, and hussars, with their horse artillery batteries starting to carry out raids of 2 or 3 days' duration along the coast in the direction of Bazardzik and Silistria, and actively exploring all that region in order to clear it of the enemy. When, towards the end of the campaign, the Russian corps on the Dobrudscha was both able to assume the offensive and to advance against the fortified camp of Bazardzik, there is some reason for surprise that Russian troops did not surround the latter place instead of allowing the Turkish division, which was there, to escape in the direction of Varna without even attempting to molest it in its retreat. This mistake can only be attributed to negligence, because the Russians had ample time to take at their leisure all the measures needful for carrying out this operation. In spite of this, however, they never thought of detaching from the 32 squadrons of cavalry and 28 horse artillery guns at their disposal a force of cavalry sufficient to watch all the issues from the fortified camp of Bazardzik.

On the whole the Russo-Turkish campaign cannot be deemed to have been very fertile in lessons of especial and practical value to the cavalry soldier. On this subject the author of 'Cavalry Tactics,' which was published in 1878, has well remarked as follows: 'The action of the Russian

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cavalry, enormously superior as it is in numbers, equipment, and discipline to that of the Turks, must have been very disappointing to those who expected, and with some reason, to see it from the first flood Turkish territory in all directions and emulate at least, if it did not surpass, the deeds of the German horsemen in 1870. How was it that with so large a mounted force at their disposal they allowed the enemy to convey reinforcements and supplies into beleaguered Plevna? How was it that Suleiman Pasha, himself almost devoid of cavalry, succeeded in removing the mass of his troops from the right to his extreme left and attacking Elena with superior forces without the Russian chiefs being made aware of the intended movement? It is evident that the Russian cavalry has been wanting in boldness and enterprise, and these are precisely the defects likely to be shown by mounted troops who, relying themselves on firearms, respect them to an inconvenient extent in the hands of others, particularly in those of the enemy's infantry.[1] On the other hand, the Turkish cavalry, though much of it was undisciplined, and all of it apparently uninstructed, does not seem to have shown any backwardness in combat, and, in spite of its inferiority, appears not unfrequently to have engaged successfully with that of the enemy.'

Lieutenant Greene, also of the United States army, remarks as follows in his well-known history of the war:[2]—

'The cavalry never fought in any great battle. In Gourko's first expedition over the Balkans it accomplished some purpose in cutting the railroads and telegraphs, and in covering Gourko's retreat; during the latter it fought on foot on several occasions. After this the Russian cavalry accomplished but little, and even failed on several occasions in its

[1] This explanation is hardly just, though the facts are true. It is contrary to the experience of the American war, in which the raiding cavalry was as ready to fight on foot as on horseback. Turkish infantry more than once laid down its arms before cavalry. The faults of the Russian cavalry were due to some of its commanders.

[2] *The Russian Campaigns in Turkey*, 1877–8, by Lieut. F. V. Greene.

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essential duty of keeping a constant touch of the enemy and a knowledge of his whereabouts. The lamentable failure of the large cavalry force assembled behind Plevna, under General Kriloff, for the purpose of intercepting supplies to that place, has been already referred to in this chapter. There were also fine opportunities throughout the campaign for cutting the Varna-Rustchuk railroad, whereby great annoyance might have been caused to the Turks; but they were not utilised.'

Following close upon the Russo-Turkish war came our campaigns in Afghanistan. In these campaigns our cavalry had the good fortune to be ably commanded, and our horsemen, both British and Indian, performed good service, both on the actual battle field and also in the ordinary duties of reconnaissance and outposts. In neither of these campaigns, however, was there much scope for the strategical employment of cavalry, nor in the course of either of the campaigns does any notable occasion seem to have presented itself where by a bold and energetic use in this way of the cavalry arm great and important results might have been secured.

Similarly in the Zulu war the irregular mounted force which was improvised in the earlier part of the campaign did excellent service throughout the campaign in reconnaissance and scouting, though it was deemed by many to have been sometimes deficient in boldness and enterprise. With regard to the regular cavalry, which was sent out subsequently, it had, except at the final battle of Ulundi, but little scope and opportunity for action of any kind.

Following close upon the termination of the Zulu war came our disastrous campaign with the Boers. This, however, came to an end before the fine cavalry force which had been sent out there, and which had recently landed, had had much opportunity of showing what it could do.

The Egyptian campaign will be fresh in the recollection of the reader, and the part played in it by the British cavalry, under the able leadership of General Sir Drury Lowe, was worthy of the army to which it belonged.

Its successes before the final attack on Tel el Kebir, such

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as the capture of Mahsameh railway station and camp, and the nocturnal charge at Kassassin, were effected by making wide detours or flank movements, which were much facilitated by the entirely open nature of the country, or desert, which was the theatre of war. As for the great event of the campaign, as far as the cavalry was concerned, viz. the advance upon Cairo and the capture of that city by the cavalry division, that exploit will be more fully dealt with in a subsequent chapter.

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CHAPTER IV.

EFFORTS DURING RECENT YEARS TO DEVELOPE THE CAPABILITIES OF CAVALRY.

Next campaign in Europe probably opened with a great cavalry battle—Reasons why this opinion is so generally entertained—Influence of two German military writers as reformers in cavalry leading and tactics—Outline sketch of measures taken to improve the capabilities of cavalry—Way in which modern employment of cavalry has altered its disposition in time of peace—Ideas prevalent in Russian army as to the use of cavalry—Manner in which these ideas have taken shape—Distribution of Russian cavalry in time of peace—Proposed method of employing German cavalry in its next campaign—Concluding remarks.

'THE next great war will begin with a fierce and long-sustained cavalry battle. Such is the opinion expressed by German officers of all ranks and of all branches of the service.'

The reasons which have caused this opinion to be so generally entertained are not far to seek. The services which, owing to exceptionally favourable circumstances, the German cavalry was able to render to its own side in the Franco-German war have so long been matter of history that it would be waste of time to dwell upon them here. But it was from the first plain enough that the real cause which enabled these services to be so easily rendered was that in that campaign the efficiency of the cavalry was all on one side, and that the German horse, except in the actual battle fields in the earlier part of the war, met with but little or no opposition in fulfilling the task which they were directed to carry out, and which step by step they realised that it was,

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under existing circumstances, possible for them to play. None, however, are better aware than the Germans themselves that they can scarcely expect that in their next campaign with one of their neighbours the task of the cavalry covering the advance of their armies will be so unopposed, and therefore so easy, as it was 14 years ago in Eastern France.[1] When, as will probably be the case in the next great European campaign, the cavalry of both sides are matched and handled with fairly equal skill, and when whole divisions of that arm are pushed forward with the same objects far in advance of the armed hosts which respectively follow in their wake, it is obvious that sooner or later collisions must take place between those opposing bodies of horse, and that several cavalry actions must in all probability open the campaign. The prestige which naturally attaches itself to the victors in the first contest of a campaign, and the moral effect produced by such first successes, are advantages for which too high a price can scarcely be paid. Hence it is that to ensure the winning of any such first contests, and to gain

[1] How easy this task was may best be realised by the almost entire absence of casualties suffered by the most active and enterprising of the German cavalry divisions. For instance, in the 4th cavalry division, which rendered such signal services to the 3rd German army, the losses in men up to the time the division reached the Marne were as follows:—

From the beginning of the war—

Killed	6
Wounded	4

From the Vosges to the Marne—

Killed	1
Wounded	3

These figures are official.

It can be no matter for surprise that in a country where no resistance was offered the cavalry could play a very active part.

It may also be observed that the regulations which were in force for the French cavalry at the outbreak of the campaign were those which had been issued at the camp at Châlons on August 9, 1867. In these regulations it was strictly prescribed that the main body of a cavalry division was always to march in rear of all other troops. See Lewal's *Etudes de Guerre*, p. 248.

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the advantages at the outset of a campaign which only a highly trained cavalry can secure, has during the last 10 years been one of the chief preoccupations of the leaders of the Germany army. This they hope to do by means of improvements in the organisation and tactics of their cavalry, which, in addition to constant and laborious training, are well calculated to give their numerous regiments of that arm the pre-eminence over any opponents whom they may be called upon to meet. From the morrow of their last war not a day was lost in studying the question in all its phases, and in taking means to correct the shortcomings and to supply the deficiencies both in equipment, organisation, and tactics which the then recent campaigns of 1866 and of 1870 had caused to be felt.

This recognition by the German military chiefs of the necessity for improving their cavalry afforded opportunities to two German officers of unquestioned merit and ability to come to the front as reformers in the art of handling the cavalry arm. I refer, of course, to Generals von Schmidt and Verdy du Vernois. Both of these men may fairly claim to have exercised a predominant influence over the tactics and instruction of the German cavalry. In point of fact as Germany, in all military matters, leads the way, while many of her neighbours forthwith proceed to imitate her, the influence of the teaching of these two men may be said to have extended over a far wider area than that of the cavalry of the German army only. It needs but a cursory acquaintance with the cavalry regulations of the principal Continental armies to perceive how much they owe to German inspiration and to the principles adopted in the German cavalry service.

What made the teaching of these two German officers the more valuable is the fact that the writings of the one may be said to complement and supply to a great extent the deficiencies of the other. The once famous Section V. of the Prussian Cavalry Regulations, of which General Schmidt was the author, was published on June 4, 1874, and the German cavalry manœuvres of that and the two next succeeding years (1875 and 1876) were carried out (even

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after his untimely death) in strict accordance with the views and principles of action which he had advocated and prescribed. The avowed aim and purport of Section V. of the Prussian Cavalry Regulations was to show how to handle and manœuvre masses of cavalry on the open field, acting against similar masses, and always with a definite object in view. In short, it was framed by the author in order to supply what was felt in the earlier part of the Franco-German campaign to be a great want, viz. a defined and recognised system of offensive and defensive tactics for large bodies of cavalry when operating against the enemy in the open field. But neither in the instructions therein contained nor in the actual practice of the German cavalry manœuvres inspired by and carried out in accordance with General von Schmidt's ideas could the student or enquirer learn much of how to manage large or small bodies of cavalry in the duties of reconnaissance and scouting, or how to act in many of the various emergencies with which cavalry soldiers engaged in such duties have on active service to deal. For instruction in these and other necessary details he had to look, at any rate till the publication of General von Schmidt's 'Cavalry Instructions,' to General Verdy du Vernois, whose work, entitled 'Die Kavallerie im Armee-Verbande,' had long been regarded, both in Germany and elsewhere, as a sort of text book on these subjects.

It is almost needless to say that, in the present day, every improvement in organisation, in tactics or mechanical appliances, which may be introduced and adopted in any of the great Continental armies, is at once noted, watched, and scrutinised in neighbouring countries by jealous eyes. This being so, the example of the Germans and the efforts which they have constantly been making ever since the termination of the Franco-Prussian war to develope and improve the capabilities of the cavalry arm were sure to attract notice and remark.

To anyone who has cared to keep himself acquainted with what has been doing during recent years in the cavalry of Continental armies the efforts which have been made to

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emulate and to keep pace with the German cavalry in its readiness for action, in tactical skill, in its study of minute details, in short, in every way which may enable it to endure the strain of a prolonged campaign, are patent enough. Improvements in organisation, in arrangements for rapid mobilisation, so as to enable the cavalry to take the field almost simultaneously with the declaration of war; the publication of revised and enlarged cavalry regulations; the institution of annual cavalry manœuvres on a considerable scale, extending over wide zones of operation,[1] and in which every effort is made to render the conditions such as will give the greatest resemblance to the work which would have to be done in a campaign (such, for instance, as independent enterprises against an enemy); elaborate experiments with various kinds of condensed forage; the formation in time of peace of independent cavalry divisions, which are to be launched forth at once to cover the advance of the main armies on the outbreak of war, or which, in the case of an invading army, are intended also to disturb and harass the mobilisation and assembly of the enemy's troops; the permanent quartering of large bodies of cavalry in the immediate neighbourhood of frontiers; the issue of improved firearms for the cavalry arm, the development of its instruction in, and consequently of its capabilities for, dismounted service; the organisation and systematic training of cavalry pioneers, &c. &c.—all these are signs which he who runs may read. No one, moreover, who has discussed this subject with Continental officers, or who is aware of what has been written upon it, or is conversant with the ideas prevalent in the great armies of Europe, can fail to be aware that the feats of the German horse in the Franco-German campaign only faintly represent what it is in future campaigns hoped that a well-trained cavalry may be able to achieve. All this

[1] As an instance of this may be mentioned the raid made by the Russian cavalry in Russian Poland in the autumn of 1876. This was the first instance in which a large cavalry force, engaged in manœuvres, attempted to undertake a raid, in the American fashion, against a far distant point of the (supposed) enemy's communications.

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is amply sufficient to show that the armies of the great Powers are fully alive to the great importance of the part which will devolve upon their cavalry in future warfare.

As bearing upon this subject the following observations, which were made by the writer in an article in the 'Journal of the United Service Institution' in 1877, may here be inserted, though they contain in some slight degree an indirect repetition of what has just been said :—

'In every case where the territory of a great Power is only divided from that of a powerful neighbour by no obstacle more formidable than a mere line upon the map, it has been realised that in the event of a declaration of war between these neighbouring States the army that can first bring its cavalry into the field, place it on its frontier ready for action, and at once make use of it in the most approved modern fashion, may be able, at any rate at the outset of the campaign, to secure very solid advantages for its own side. In other words, both for the cavalry of the army of invasion and also for that of the army that intends to defend its own frontier rapidity of concentration will be all-important. For these reasons it is not to be wondered at that no pains have been spared by Continental Powers to have their cavalry so organised as to be constantly ready on the shortest possible notice to act. In some cases, as in the Russian army, its whole organisation and equipment has been entirely recast ; in others, such as in the German army, successive alterations and improvements have been adopted, until a point of readiness has been attained which is as near perfection as possible. And this necessity of being ever in readiness has not only influenced the organisation of cavalry, but in the great Continental armies has necessarily determined the localities in which large bodies of this arm must be quartered in time of peace. Let anyone examine the conterminous frontiers of some of the great Powers, and let him ascertain and mark the number of the cavalry regiments quartered in garrison towns on each side of the frontier, and he will see that their number is oftentimes so great at these points that they can only have been

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placed there in order to be as near as possible to the spot where their services would, in the event of an outbreak of war, be immediately required.'

As another instance of the efforts which are now continually being made by European Powers to shape the organisation of cavalry so as to meet the requirements of the day, and also as illustrating the ideas which are gaining ground in some quarters as to the manner in which cavalry should for the future be trained, the new organisation of the Russian cavalry may be mentioned.

There has been for some years past an influential section of officers in the Russian army who have constantly advocated the theory that European cavalry of the present day, equipped and drilled after the old-fashioned methods, is unsuited to the requirements of modern warfare, and who have insisted that a cavalry organised and equipped more after the manner of what is generally understood as irregular cavalry, and taking as its model and example, both as to armament and method of fighting, the American cavalry of the Civil War, is the kind of cavalry which will make its mark in future warfare.

This idea is no new one in Russia (and was a favourite one many years ago with the Emperor Nicholas [1]), and it found practical expression in the reorganisation of Russian cavalry which took place in 1875. Each division of the Line cavalry was then composed of 4 regiments, viz. 1 regiment of hussars, 1 of lancers, 1 of dragoons, and 1 of Cossacks.

Warned by the useless sacrifices and terrible losses invariably suffered by masses of cavalry in the Franco-German campaign whenever it was attempted to use them in the old method against infantry, and taking advantage of the experience of the American Civil War, Russia determined to try another system, and resolved to train a portion of her cavalry to act avowedly as mounted rifles. The Russian dragoons, of which, as just stated, up to the year 1882 there used to

[1] The Emperor Nicholas maintained at one time a considerable force of dragoons, but these troops never had an opportunity of showing what they could do in European warfare.

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be 1 regiment in each division, are nothing more or less than mounted rifles, and they receive a special training to enable them to fulfil the duties of such troops. The regulations for their instruction prescribe that they are to be specially taught to pride themselves upon their ability to fight on foot and to take the place of infantry; their horses are, in fact, to be used chiefly as a means of rapid locomotion from point to point, and not as cavalry of the generally established type. They are armed with the same rifle as the Russian infantry (Berdan), except that the length of the barrel is somewhat shorter. All this was effected as far back as 1875. Within the last two years or so, however, this idea of training cavalry to fight on foot as well as on horseback has been developed in Russia to a startling extent and upon a very large scale. As will be known to most of my readers, in the latter end of 1882 the Russian cavalry was again reorganised, and the main feature of this reorganisation was the conversion of all the hussar and lancer regiments of the regular cavalry of the Line into dragoons or mounted rifles. All other kinds of cavalry were abolished, except a few regiments of the Guard cavalry. Even these in the spring of 1883 were equipped with the Berdan rifle, and are now trained in the same manner as the dragoons of the Line. This, it must be owned, is a bold and, it will seem to many, a very hazardous experiment to make. In waging war against Asiatic nations and barbarous tribes such troops as these are certain, as we have always found, to do good service, but whether they will be equally serviceable in a European campaign is a question upon which, among military experts and critics, grave doubts are naturally entertained. But however this may be, it is clear that those who sway the destinies of the Russian army have the courage of their opinions, and it is evident that, rightly or wrongly, they look upon cavalry of the recognised European type, as regards its usefulness in the actual battle field, as an expensive and useless anachronism, and in many respects as unfitted to deal with the exigencies of modern warfare. The regimental officers of the Russian cavalry, as might naturally

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be expected, were one and all bitterly opposed to this change; but it is also worthy of remark that there appears to be a considerable section of influential officers of high rank in the Russian army, and especially among those on the staff, who profess to be well content with what has been done.

On the other hand, however, it is especially worthy of note that the opinion of Continental officers of sound judgment and experience is almost universally unfavourable to this conversion of the Russian cavalry into mounted infantry; nay, more, it may be said that the idea that this kind of troops will prove of service in European warfare often meets with incredulity in Continental military circles whenever this subject is discussed. The fact, moreover, that in none of the other Continental armies has any notion of organising bodies of mounted infantry ever been in recent times seriously entertained, should not be lost sight of, inasmuch as this indicates that the reasons which are always urged against such proposals are generally deemed to be substantial and sound. In any case it is certain that such troops as the present Russian cavalry have never in modern times been pitted against highly trained cavalry of the ordinary type, and the question as to whether their employment is to be a success or a failure will probably be left for Russia's next campaign in Europe to decide.

While on the subject of the Russian cavalry another point may be noted. The nature of the duties which for the future will devolve upon Continental cavalry at the outset of a campaign has, in the same manner as in the case of the French and German armies, naturally influenced also the distribution of the Russian cavalry in time of peace. Up to within 30 years or so ago Russia had no great reason to be specially apprehensive for the safety of the western—i.e. the European—frontier of her empire. The weakness of her neighbours, the paucity of railways, and the immense distances that an enemy's forces would consequently have to traverse ere he could strike an effective blow were sufficient to guard her against any fears on this score. During the last 25 years or so, however, the situation has, as all the

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world knows, materially changed. This altered state of affairs has induced Russia to take such measures as will enable her to guard against any sudden inroad being made against the most vulnerable portion of her vast empire, viz. the immense extent of her western frontier. With this view very much of her cavalry, which had before been always quartered in various internal parts of the empire, has now been échelonned on or near her western frontier. In other words, it is in time of peace so quartered as to be ready instantly for any contingency that may occur. According to its present organisation the Russian cavalry of the Line comprises, excluding the 3 divisions of the cavalry of the Caucasus, 14 divisions, and of these all but 3 or 4 are quartered permanently in proximity to and on the borders of her western frontiers.

With regard to the manner in which in the next outbreak of war between any of the great Continental Powers the cavalry of either side, especially the German cavalry, will probably attempt to play its part, the following general programme may serve as a sample of what the cavalry of an invading army may be expected to aim at. It was written in 1879 by Captain von Widdern (a German officer who has made himself a name as a writer on military topics), and it is certainly plain and outspoken enough :—

'In a future war the divisions of German cavalry would not wait tamely on the frontier, as in 1870, before commencing hostilities, until the corps d'armée had accomplished their deployment in rear. Knowing that the fortified places constructed in Alsace-Lorraine would be sufficient to protect the frontier, they would leave merely to a few regiments the task of forming a screen between these places, and would at once cross the frontier, and would invade the enemy's country with the great mass of available cavalry in many directions, with the object of harassing and disturbing the normal course of mobilisation of troops in the enemy's country, and also of preventing the arming and provisioning of the fortresses and other strong points. They would put the railways and telegraphs *hors de service*; they would

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spread false intelligence by circulating news of the approach of hostile troops at points where no troops were really likely to appear, or by leaving purposely in suitable places false returns and papers, either manuscript or printed, in order to mislead the enemy's staff. They would carry off important persons, such as guides, &c.; seize upon newspapers, telegrams, bankers' correspondence, in order to obtain trustworthy intelligence, &c. &c.'

In conclusion, it may be asked, What is the lesson which English cavalry officers may take to heart from all that they may see going on in the cavalry of Continental armies? The moral is obvious enough—viz. that they should strive to do their best to qualify themselves as far as possible for the various duties which will devolve upon them in time of war, and to keep pace with their Continental comrades; that they should make every endeavour to overcome the defects of our cavalry organisation instead of allowing themselves to be overcome by them; and that they should constantly strive to develope and extend the training of their men and horses, so that when the hour of trial comes the British cavalry may still be found, as it has ever been, ready and able to hold its own and to acquit itself worthily and well in any work which in the course of active service it may be called upon to do.

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CHAPTER V.

DISTANCES, INTERVALS, LENGTH IN COLUMN OF ROUTE, &c. &c.

Importance of accurate ideas as to distances and intervals, length of roadway occupied by troops in column of route, &c.—Attention paid to this in Continental armies—Enumeration of most useful distances and intervals as prescribed in the cavalry regulations—Distances traversed by cavalry at various paces — Calculations which can be made from these data—Example—Tables showing data and calculations as to the length in column of route, &c. &c., of bodies of horse artillery and cavalry in the German army—Similar data adopted in the French army—Similar data for English troops—Remarks on deployments.

THE space occupied by bodies of cavalry and horse artillery, the distances and intervals which it is necessary or convenient to maintain between the various units, either at the place of assembly, when manœuvring, or on the march ; the length of roadway which they occupy in column of route; the allowances which must be made for lengthening out of the column through loss of proper distances ; the time necessary for starting and getting these bodies into motion ; &c.—all these are elementary points upon which it is as well that cavalry officers, in common with their comrades of other branches of the service, should have tolerably clear and well-defined ideas. This is more especially the case where considerable bodies of troops are concerned, inasmuch as in such cases approximate accuracy upon these points often becomes a vital element in making necessary calculations as to time, distance, &c., upon which the successful conduct of military operations so greatly depends. It is natural that on the Continent, where military operations are on so large a scale,

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and where the subject is of so much importance, great attention should have been given to it. The English cavalry officer, therefore, need be at no loss for trustworthy data to which he can refer if he wishes to compare calculations made in England with those which obtain in the armies of the great military Powers.[1]

There are many instructions as to distances and intervals laid down in the Cavalry Regulations, but those which will be found most useful to remember may be summed up as follows :—

A horse's length is a term of measurement, which is used in calculating depths, and equals 8 feet.

The distance between horse and horse from head to croup in column of fours, sections, and half-sections is half a horse's length, or 4 feet.

In column of fours, sections, and half-sections the distance between squadrons is half a horse's length, or 4 feet.

In column of fours the length of a cavalry column is the same as the extent of front in line.

In column of sections the length of a cavalry column is double the frontage in line.

The length of a cavalry column in sections can also be conveniently calculated at a yard per man. Thus a squadron of 48 file will occupy in column of sections 96 yards as nearly as possible.

[1] It may, however, here be remarked that, notwithstanding the obvious importance of the subject, the ideas generally prevalent upon it were, at any rate in some armies, up to within 15 or 20 years ago, extremely vague and ill-defined, and it was only after dearly-bought experience had shown the dire confusion which a hazy and inaccurate knowledge of it inevitably entailed that its importance was realised. Thus General Lewal, in his *Etudes de Guerre*, remarks, in reference to some of the marches of the French army during the Franco-German war, 'One has witnessed the departure of divisions timed so as to take place, one after another, at intervals of half an hour each, when 4 times as long was in actual fact indispensable. By such ignorance there was imposed an hour and a half's useless fatigue upon the second division, and double that time on the third.'

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The length of a cavalry column in half-sections is 4 times the frontage in line.

The rate of walk is 4 miles an hour, or 117 yards per minute.

The rate of trot is 8 miles an hour, or 235 yards per minute.

The ordinary rate of cavalry on the march, alternately trotting and marching, is 5 miles an hour, or 146 yards per minute.

The rate of gallop is 12 miles an hour, or 352 yards in a minute—i.e. just 3 times the rate of the walk.

From the above data it is evident that when the distance to be traversed is known, and the pace is decided on, the time necessary for a march or movement may be easily calculated.

It is also plain that the strength of a body of cavalry may be approximately estimated if the following points are known or can be ascertained :—

The time it took to pass a fixed point ;

The pace at which it marched ;

The formation in which it was marching.

Allowance must be made, of course, when necessary, for loss of distance by opening out or straggling on the march. Example : A cavalry patrol brings in the following information :—

'This morning a body of the enemy's cavalry, preceded by a few scouts, who were sent on in advance, passed through the village of A., going in the direction of the railway station at B.'

The sergeant in charge of the reconnoitring patrol, who had his wits about him, was able to elicit from the inhabitants the following definite facts regarding this body of the enemy, viz. :—

The men were 4 or 5 abreast. They passed through the village at a trot in a tolerably compact column. The postmaster, who was standing at his gate as the column went by him, happened to take an accurate note from the church

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clock opposite of the time the column took to pass him, viz. exactly 2 minutes.

From these data the officer to whom the report is brought in is able to deduce as follows :—

The formation was evidently that of sections. As the pace was the trot, or 235 yards per minute, the following simple calculation gives the approximate length of the column :—

$$235 \times 2 = 470 \text{ yards.}$$

470 yards would be the length of the roadway occupied in column of route by 470 men in sections. A deduction, however, of one-third may safely be made for loss of distance, and the strength of the enemy's cavalry may therefore be estimated at little over 300 men, probably 3 strong squadrons.

With regard to the length of roadway occupied by larger bodies of cavalry and horse artillery on the march, the following tables [1] will serve to show the data and calculations generally accepted in some of the chief Continental armies.

[1] These figures and data for French or German armies are taken from Colonel Pierron's *Méthodes de Guerre*, vol. ii. pp. 1210–24.

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German Army.

Figures, data, and distances recognised and adopted in the German army as bases for the calculation of the approximate length in column of route of cavalry and horse artillery.[1]

Length in Column of Route	Length in Yards	Allowance for Loss of Distance by Opening out of		Time necessary for Filing off from the Halt
		¼	⅓	
Of a squadron of cavalry 130 strong, with its led horses and ambulance cart	175	44	58	1′–2′
Of a regiment of 4 squadrons of above-named strength, under similar conditions	743	185	248	6′–7′
Of a cavalry brigade of 2 regiments, under similar conditions . . .	1,532	383	511	13′–15′
Of a cavalry brigade of 2 regiments, with all its baggage . . .	1,730	432	577	15′–16′
Of a cavalry division of 6 regiments, i.e. of 3 brigades of 2 regiments each, and 1 battery of artillery, with led horses, hospital and regimental waggons	5,482	1,370	1,827	45′–50′
Of a cavalry division with all its baggage	6,293	1,573	2,098	55′–60′
Of a battery of horse artillery, with its led horses and half its waggons (4)	308	77	103	3′–4′
Of a battery of horse artillery with all its waggons, forge, &c. . .	459	115	153	4′–5′

[1] It is clear that before the last section of any cavalry force, be it squadron, regiment, or brigade, moves off from parade, the leading section has to cover a length equal to that of the whole force in column of route + the depth of the formation. A certain margin of time, therefore, to allow for the distance of this depth, and also for contingencies, is given in the last column in these tables, showing the time necessary to file off from the halt.

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French Army.

Figures, data, and distances recognised and adopted in the French army as bases for calculation of the approximate length in column of route of horse artillery.

A French battery of horse artillery, for the purpose of measuring the length of roadway occupied by it in column of route, may be said to consist of 6 principal units, each of which is made up as follows, viz. :—

1 gun, taking up a distance of	13 yards
1 distance	1 ,,
1 peloton of gunners	7 ,,
1 distance	1 ,,
1 waggon	14 ,,
Total	36 ,,
Therefore the total length of these 6 units and of the 5 distances of 1 yard which separate each of them = ...	221 yards
Add to this for the officers, trumpeters, farriers, forge carts, waggon with spare materials, &c., and spare horses	80 ,,
Total	301 ,,

Cavalry.

Figures, data, and distances recognised and adopted in the French army as bases for calculation of the approximate length in column of route of cavalry.

Length in Column of Route, 4 abreast	Length in Yards	Allowance for Loss of Distance of		Time necessary for Filing off from the Halt
		¼	⅓	
Of a cavalry squadron, 135 men in the ranks	140	35	47	1′–2′
Of a cavalry regiment of 4 squadrons, with led horses, forge cart, with 4 horses and 4 bât horses . . .	704	176	235	8′
Of a cavalry brigade of 2 regiments, as above, with brigade staff, &c. .	1,456	364	485	17′–18′
Of a battery of horse artillery . .	301	75	100	3′

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English Army.

Figures, data, and distances for calculating the approximate length in column of route of English horse artillery and cavalry.

HORSE ARTILLERY.

The depth in column of route of a horse artillery subdivision without a waggon, with gun detachments, front of 8 men, marching in 2 ranks	28½ yards
The depth in column of route of a horse artillery battery, gun detachments, front of 8 men in 2 ranks is practically 6 times the above length—i.e.	168 ,,

The above are bare requirements, and if extra horses are added, as is usually the case, they must be allowed for.[1]

In column of route, if waggons accompany a field battery, each waggon follows its gun, but for horse artillery there is nothing laid down in the regulations as regards the position of the waggons on the march. They would, however, in most cases, especially when near the enemy, be more likely to bring up the rear of the battery than to remain with their subdivisions. They are therefore included in the above calculation for horse artillery. See the 'Elements of Modern Tactics,' by Major Wilkinson Shaw, pp. 42, 43.

The war establishment of a squadron is as follows :—

Officers	6
Troop sergeant-majors	2
Sergeants	6
Corporals	8
Artificers	4
Trumpeters	2
Privates	120
Drivers	2
Total officers and men . . .	150

[1] A gun or waggon with 6 horses takes 15 yards in column of route. For each number of horses more or less than 6, 4 yards should be added or subtracted.

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Deducting the troop horses required to mount the sergeant-majors, sergeants, artificers, and trumpeters, and allowing a margin for casualties, a squadron with the above establishment may be taken at 48 files, or 96 horses in the ranks for all purposes of calculation.

Length in Column of Route (Sections)		Length in Yards	Allowance for Loss of Distance of		Time necessary for Filing off from the Halt
			¼	⅓	
	Yds.				
A squadron of 48 file . .	96				
6 men per squadron, each with a led horse (in half-sections)	23				
	119	119	30	40	1′–1½′
Regiment of 4 squadrons of same strength . . .	476				
3 squadron intervals of 4 feet	4				
Staff and band	30				
	510	510	127	170	4′–5′
Of a brigade of 3 regiments of similar strength and under similar conditions, with a battery of horse artillery without waggons, viz.—					
Staff of the brigade . .	25				
1st regiment . . .	510				
Distance	28½				
Horse artillery battery .	168				
Distance	28½				
2nd regiment . . .	510				
Distance	24				
3rd regiment . . .	510				
	1,804	1,804	451	601	15′–17′

With regard to deployments, it may be observed that it is highly important that every cavalry commander should have a fairly accurate idea of how long the force under his command, be it a squadron, regiment, or brigade, will take to deploy. Supposing, for instance, that a regiment of 4 squadrons of 48 file is marching in sections through a defile or on a road shut in on both sides; at the ordinary calculation of a yard per man, such a body of cavalry should occupy

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4 × (48 × 2) = 384 yards of roadway. If the head of the column passing through this narrow road issues out on open ground beyond, and the order is given to deploy, it is clear that the rear section, before coming into line, will have to traverse at least 384 yards + the extent of front occupied by the regiment when deployed, which would in this case be 228 yards. The total distance to be traversed would be therefore 612 yards. Making some slight allowance for checks and loss of distance, this distance should be covered at the trot in about 3 minutes or so.

On open ground, when the heads of squadrons in rear could incline to a flank at once, in order to deploy, the movement would naturally take less time. Where large bodies of cavalry are concerned an ample margin of time should be allowed for checks and loss of proper distances in column of route, &c. &c.

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CHAPTER VI.

THE USE AND ABUSE OF CAVALRY.

Efficiency of cavalry depends greatly upon th emanner in which it is used—No arm so quickly ruined or so difficult to replace—Commanders should endeavour to gain a knowledge of how much cavalry can and cannot do—Frequent instances of cavalry being utterly ruined by over-exertion—Necessity of husbanding its strength—Ordinary precautions to be taken with this view — Instances of how these matters are very commonly neglected—Ways in which strength of cavalry is often uselessly frittered away and wasted.

THE judicious employment of cavalry in the duties of reconnaissance and in gaining information of the enemy's movements has, as is well known, in many campaigns had the greatest influence upon the general success of the operations, and has often saved much useless fighting and bloodshed. The important services which cavalry have in some cases been able to render have, however, depended in no small degree upon a knowledge of how to economise its energy and strength, so as to have it thoroughly efficient when it is requisite that its action should be called into play. No arm is so quickly ruined as cavalry, and no arm is so difficult to replace. When a campaign is of any duration this want of a numerous cavalry grows in proportion to that duration and to the ever-increasing extent of territory occupied by a victorious army. Moreover, even supposing that in a campaign the cavalry is managed with skill, that all its wants are fairly well supplied, and that its strength is kept up by opportune reinforcements, it will inevitably happen, as the

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campaign goes on, that the losses of men and horses suffered by the first line will periodically reduce to a most material extent its effective fighting strength.

In time of peace a cavalry commander has but little chance of acquiring any exact knowledge or measure of the services which cavalry can on an emergency perform, or the amount of continuous work it can go through without its efficiency being destroyed, or at any rate for a time being materially impaired.

In time of war a most useful quality which every cavalry commander, whether of a squadron, a regiment, or a brigade, should possess or strive to acquire is, to know how much his cavalry can do, to be able to judge with tolerable accuracy how much of it is necessary to bring to a successful issue an enterprise which has been determined on, and what proportion of it he should hold in reserve, either to fulfil other objects or to give it a chance of repose. Commanders who, in order to attain any object they may have in view, incessantly work their cavalry, without caring to think how quickly its efficiency may be impaired by the strength and endurance of the horses being unduly overtaxed, will quickly ruin it, and thereby run a chance, it may be, of seeing the effective action of their whole force much crippled by the want of a sufficient strength in this arm.

The annals of modern campaigns are full of instances in which, either from injudicious employment or from force of circumstances, the efficiency of large bodies of cavalry has for the remainder of a campaign been paralysed or destroyed.

In the American Civil War the cavalry of the Confederate army was so exhausted by the hardships and fatigues of active service that after the winter campaign of 1862–3 General Stuart's cavalry had to be almost entirely remounted, though in this case the great majority of the men rode their own horses, which they were in the habit of tending with great solicitude and care.

Again, after the march across the Balkans, which was undertaken by General Gourko in the summer of 1877, the cavalry squadrons under the command of that general were

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so utterly exhausted in a period of 20 days that it was necessary to give them a month of complete repose to enable them to recover themselves, and to leave them for that purpose in rear of the army.

What, then, are the practical precautions to be observed which will on service tend to preserve the efficiency of the cavalry and keep it in good working order? The more obvious of them may be summed up as follows :—

Firstly, to employ no greater cavalry force than is necessary for the object in view. Obvious though this precaution may seem, it is difficult to observe in practice. It often happens on service that a brigade is employed where a regiment would amply suffice, and that a whole troop is set in motion for a task which a patrol or detachment of a few men could far better perform, &c.

Secondly, when the services to be rendered by the cavalry are very arduous or of such long and continuous duration as to render it necessary that it should be carried on by reliefs, it is important that both the strength and frequency of these reliefs should be arranged so that the duties and fatigues shall fall equally upon all the fractions and units of the cavalry available for use.

Thirdly, it is well to bear in mind that there is nothing which so greatly tries and harasses cavalry as being intermixed on the line of march with columns of infantry. In this case the cavalry has of course to accommodate and restrain its space and rate of march to that of the infantry, and consequently the horses have often to bear the weight of their riders, with their kits and accoutrements, &c., for perhaps half a day in order to perform a march for which, under proper management, 2 or 3 hours would have sufficed.

It might perhaps be thought that all this would always be obvious, and that on active service, where ordinary prudence has been observed by a commander and his staff, there would be but little chance of such mistakes as these being made. There is, however, ample experience to prove that this is not so. There is scarcely a campaign of the

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present century in which such gross mistakes as these have not been constantly committed. General Thibault, in his 'Manuel des Etats-Majors,' lifted up his voice against such errors as these, which he declared were frequently made during the wars of the Napoleonic period. In the 6 weeks' war of 1866 it was mainly in consequence of their cavalry being mixed up with columns of all arms that the Prussians in the earlier part of the campaign failed to have their outpost and reconnaissance duties well carried out.

Again, in the French cavalry regulations which were in force at the outbreak of the Franco-German war it was prescribed that the place of the cavalry in the column of march was in rear of the infantry. Other instances, and plenty of them, might be quoted, but these will suffice.

Fourthly, there are various small precautions, which should always be observed on active service, by means of which the work of the men and horses may be minimised, and they may be spared unnecessary fatigue.

This can be effected both on the march, on outpost duty, and in quarters in the various ways which an experienced cavalry officer will well understand. If there is a prolonged halt the men are dismounted; if there is a steep descent it eases the horses greatly if the men dismount and lead them in hand. The night's rest should not be prematurely cut short by fixing the hour for saddling too soon, or by starting unnecessarily early, a practice which entails men and horses having to wait uselessly and sometimes for hours at the general parade or place of assembly.

Indeed, when the force is a large one, and there is no immediate prospect of fighting, the custom of appointing day after day a general rendezvous or place of assembly before beginning the march is often most injurious to the cavalry. Thus, in 1812, Murat ruined his cavalry because every morning before commencing the march he used to concentrate at the general rendezvous many thousands of horses, so that some regiments had always to wait there for a long time before setting off. In such cases it is far better to set all troops, but especially cavalry, in motion directly from their

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cantonments or bivouacs, and to calculate approximately the time and place (and this is easily done) at which each corps or detachment should be ready to take up its place in the column of march. It is by attention to such minute details as these, which may appear insignificant and paltry in themselves, but which are in reality very important in their general results, that cavalry officers, whether they be in command of a troop, squadron, regiment, or brigade, will be able to maintain their horses in good working order, and both fit and ready to perform any services and to make any sacrifices which may be required of them.

A very common form of frittering away the strength of a body of cavalry on outpost duty is the placing too many vedettes. Upon this point General von Schmidt, in his 'Instructions for Cavalry,' wrote as follows:—'The fact of operating before the enemy does not necessitate a widely extended chain of vedettes; what is wanted rather is to occupy the roads, important heights whence observations can be made to some distance, and knots of roads with detached non-commissioned officers' posts (or so-called Cossack posts), of which only 1 man remains mounted. These Cossack posts are much more useful than vedettes; the security of troops in camp is much more surely effected through them, and the horses are much less worked than when widely extended chains of vedettes are employed. The partiality for the latter is very general, but why have this expenditure of power? Where I can secure the desired end with 1 vedette, or with 1 post, I do not place 2 or even 3; when the sentry on the picket about 20 or 30 paces in front of it can keep in view the vedettes or posts, I do not place a communicating post there too.'[1]

It will be clear from what has been said in this chapter that it is of great importance for any cavalry officer, whether he be leader of a small cavalry force or of a large one, to know how to make a judicious use of the force at his disposal, and to economise its energy and strength.

[1] See translation of Von Schmidt's *Instructions for Cavalry*, by Major C. W. Bowdler Bell, 8th Hussars, p. 215.

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But *the* cause which does more than anything else to ruin the strength and efficiency of cavalry remains yet to be mentioned. This cause is, it need hardly be said, sore backs. As is well known, if proper precautions be not taken upon this point there is no limit to the extent to which a body of cavalry may be crippled from this cause. Instances of this may be adduced from nearly every campaign. The ordinary precautions for preventing sore backs should be well known to every cavalry soldier who has passed his drills, and need not here be mentioned. There is, however, one point upon which it may be advisable to comment. Young cavalry officers do not always realise how much depends upon the condition which their horses are in when first they enter upon a campaign, or even upon a course of peace manœuvres which entails exertions greater than those which they have been used to. If there has been a possibility (which is by no means always the case) of gradually bringing the horses into *hard* condition before they are called upon to make long marches or great exertions sore backs can, if due care be used, be easily avoided, except in a very few cases. On the other hand, under contrary conditions, it is often very difficult indeed for a body of cavalry to avoid them. If, as often happens, a troop or squadron has a few spare led horses, these can be successfully made use of in preventing sore backs, inasmuch as directly any horse first becomes tender and galled its rider and his accoutrements may for a day or two be transferred to one of the led horses, and the timely rest and freedom from pressure thus obtained will often suffice to effect a cure.

Again, how often is the strength and efficiency of cavalry uselessly frittered away because no clear distinction is kept in view as to the duties which it ought and which it ought not to be called on to perform. Thus it is a mistaken idea to act, as is so often done, upon the principle that when the country is open outposts should be furnished during the day by the cavalry, and that the part of the infantry should be limited to occupying the defiles and important points in the rear of the cavalry.

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In nearly all cases when infantry and cavalry are together on outpost duty there is a clear and simple principle to be kept in view, and upon which it is, as a rule, advisable as far as possible to act—viz. that watching the enemy and observation of his movements at all fixed posts in the neighbourhood of the pickets (sentries, &c.) should be performed by the infantry, and that all observation which has to be done on the move, such as patrols, reconnoitring, &c., should be done by the cavalry. A mounted man not only does not see any better than a man on foot, but his attention may often be distracted by his horse; he is seen far more easily at a distance by the enemy, and is moreover often unable to shelter himself from view, as an infantry man is in many ways able to do. To the cavalry belongs the work of patrolling and reconnaissance, which are always the best guarantees for security and the surest means of getting information. It will often, however, be difficult for the cavalry, especially when the force of this arm is small, to do this effectually if the strength of men and horses has been needlessly frittered away in work which infantry can better perform.

Another reason why a great deal is unnecessarily taken out of cavalry is because due care is not always taken that the camp or bivouac is as near as possible to the place where the horses have to water. Thus, for instance, if the place for water is a mile, as it often unavoidably is, or a mile and a half from camp, the mere going to and fro this distance 3 times a day entails 6 or 9 miles upon the horses. When this is added perhaps to a long march it constitutes a sensible increase to the work of horses and men.

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CHAPTER VII.

INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING OF THE TROOP AND SQUADRON.

Efficiency of a troop or squadron depends upon individual training of horses and men—How this efficiency can best be maintained—Necessity of decentralising the work of training and instruction—Causes which have hitherto often hindered this being done—Advisability of a definite standard of efficiency and training—Practical tests which are useful in proving whether men and horses have been well trained.

It need hardly be said that the efficiency of a squadron or troop primarily depends upon the instruction and training of every individual man and horse which compose it. If these are each and all well instructed and trained there will be but little difficulty in teaching them to work well together in troop or squadron, so as to enable the latter to take its place in regimental drill.

It may be asked, How can the efficiency and training of the men for their work in the field best be maintained at a high standard under the system of instruction at present prevailing in the British cavalry? Obviously one of the best methods of doing this is by decentralising and dividing the work of instruction and training (as soon as the recruits and remounts have passed out of the adjutant's and riding master's hands) among the troop officers, who should continue and develope the work which the two former officers have only begun.

It is especially needful to insist strongly upon the advantages to be gained by thus decentralising the work to be done, because in our own cavalry it has been too much the

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custom to go upon the opposite system—viz. to centralise all the instruction and training of men and horses, and to leave it in the hands of the adjutant, the riding master, and their subordinate staffs. Though very good results are often obtained by this system it has the great drawback of leaving the troop officers but comparatively little share or interest in the training and instruction of their men. There can be no doubt that in any regiment where the responsibility (if not of primarily training and instructing), at any rate, of maintaining the efficiency of the men and horses devolves upon the troop officers, much more interest will be taken in the work, and far better general results will be attained than when, as has been too often the case, all this work is centralised in one or two officers of the corps.

No one is better aware than the writer of these pages of the many and great difficulties which, owing to many causes, troop officers in the British cavalry experience in getting together their men for instruction and practice of their duties in the field, and how few opportunities in many cases they have of doing so.

These difficulties arise from many causes. In the first place, it has not, till quite recently, at any rate, been the custom of many commanding officers to regard with much favour the system of troop officers imparting instruction to their men, as they have often been inclined to regard this as an encroachment upon the province of the adjutant and contrary to established precedent or custom.

Secondly, the strength of a troop upon an ordinary peace establishment of the British cavalry is so weak that after making the inevitable deductions on account of men on guard and in hospital, men employed as servants, as young horsemen, and on duties of various kinds, there is, at the best of times, a very small residue left for parade. Supposing, however, that a troop commander is anxious to maintain the efficiency of his troop, and that he is allowed some scope and opportunity for doing so, it will be found convenient in a regiment to have some definite and uniform standard of efficiency and training by which the performances

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of men and horses can with a fair amount of accuracy be gauged.

Opinions may, and of course will, differ as to what this standard of efficiency should be which an average cavalry soldier and his horse may be expected to reach. In this matter no hard and fast line can be drawn. To any officer who takes a pride in his troop, and who desires every man and horse in it to be ready and efficient for work, the few following practical tests are suggested as being useful, in showing how individual men and horses have been trained, how far they are fit to take their places in the ranks, and how they can work together as a troop in the field :—

I. To see that every horse will at once, on the command being given to his rider to gallop out to a certain indicated point, willingly leave the ranks and go straight and smoothly forward without any twisting round or hanging back, or without his rider having to spur and force him forward.

II. That every man in the troop *who ever goes on parade* can use his sword or lance with ease and skill, and can ride past his troop officer at a rapid pace while doing so. (This is best tested by forming a line of two or three markers and making the men go past it cutting the sword or performing the lance exercise at a smart gallop. In order to make a thorough inspection of how this is done each man should be made to finish his performance before the man next to him is permitted to begin.)

III. That every man can take his horse over the regimental jumps,[1] of which there should be at least three or four, without being half shaken out of his saddle, losing a stirrup, or 'craning' at the jumps as he comes up. Horses which are very old, or which in the opinion of the troop officer are unsafe to ride over the jumps, may be excused. The men, however, who ride these horses should, when the troop is being practised at jumping, be mounted on other horses and be practised at riding over the jumps. Horses that are backward or timid should be practised over the

[1] These jumps should, of course, be in the open field, and not less than three or four in number.

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jumps with a cavesson two or three times before being ridden over them.

IV. That every man in the troop is well acquainted with dismounted duty, that he knows both when to dismount and when he should hold the horses of the men of the section to which he belongs, when in line, in fours, or sections, &c.; that he knows his place when formed up dismounted, and all other details connected with this duty.

Each troop should be practised and perfectly accustomed to resume its proper formation very quickly after the disorder which must inevitably ensue from even a successful attack. In order to attain this object the instructions laid down in p. 189 of the 'Cavalry Regulations,' Section 16, should be closely followed and frequently practised.

The formation in line after a retirement in disorder should also be frequently practised, as prescribed in p. 189, Section 17, 'Cavalry Regulations.'

N.B. In instructing the men in this exercise the distinction between resuming the proper formation after a *successful attack* and the formation of line after a retirement in disorder must clearly be explained and practised.

Every subaltern should also be acquainted with these subjects, and able to instruct and to correct the men when wrong.

The men should be habituated to move at once and simultaneously at the sound of the trumpet.

In taking up any position when manœuvring, the leader should bring up his troop accurately to the marker or other point indicated, and halt at the right time and at the right place, allowing just enough space for dressing up. There will then be no shuffling or passaging of the troop after the halt has sounded in order to bring the troop into its right position.

Any troop commander in whose troop each and all of the men and horses can go satisfactorily through the performances which have here been indicated may rest satisfied that a high standard of efficiency has been reached, and that his men, either as individual horsemen or collectively as a troop, are in a fair way of becoming capable of doing anything which

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as cavalry soldiers they may be called upon to perform. He may also rest assured that simple as this standard of efficiency may appear on paper, it will not be reached by a whole troop or squadron without the bestowal of a great deal of pains and trouble upon many of the horses and men.

The following rules for gauging and testing the efficiency of a squadron were laid down by the late General von Schmidt in his 'Instructions,' which he published for the German cavalry. Allowing for some slight inevitable differences in the systems of drill, the rules laid down are equally applicable to a British as to a German cavalry squadron. Both squadron and commanding officers may find them useful, and may easily learn many hints from the writings of one who in his lifetime did so much to influence the leading and tactics of cavalry in the chief armies of Europe :— [1]

'An expert will be able to see at a glance when a squadron has been thoroughly drilled ; he will observe that the following matters are attended to :—

'(*a*) All commands and sounds will be obeyed simultaneously by the head and rear of the squadron, and in the quickest manner ; all will at once commence the movement on the signal being given, and on the sound "Halt" will stand fast without any movement whatever.

'(*b*) They will ride the exact pace ordered, which shows that the men in the ranks are really riding their horses and have them in hand.

'(*c*) In wheels into column, into line, and about the inward flank guides will stand firm as rocks, whatever the pace may be, without attending to the rest of their zug ; and the outward flank guides will steadily maintain the original pace.

'(*d*) The true principles regulating the important movement of changing direction on a movable pivot will be observed, on which principally depends the ability to wheel in column without the slightest hesitation or check being

[1] These rules are taken verbatim from the translation of the *Instructions* made for the Intelligence Department by Major C. W. Bowdler Bell, 8th Hussars.

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observed; they will not fly outwards away from the pivot hand, but maintain their touch from it, so as to lose no ground or distance, thus preserving the fundamental condition, strict uniformity of pace.

'(*e*) All wheels on the move, whether in zugs or squadron, will be made on a movable pivot, a large arc being described in a forward direction.

'(*f*) The commands of the zug leaders must be obeyed to the letter, without the men considering whether the zug will make a mistake by carrying it out. This is absolutely essential.

'(*g*) The grand fundamental principle of all evolutions is uniformity and evenness of pace. This important condition of cavalry movements must never be lost sight of, whether in column or line, even if distance in column or alignment in line be lost for a moment; for it is only through it that safety, steadiness, and preservation from accident and external disturbing influences can be ensured and the costly horse material be preserved. Wherever these principles are deviated from and offended against, there we shall see the worst riding and drill.

'(*h*) If the squadron has acquired dexterity and handiness, it can at once, after any evolution, take up and maintain a new direction, whether perpendicular or oblique, whether in retreat or to the front, after the signal "Front," whether in breaking into half-column from line or after advancing in half-column.

'(*i*) The flank guides will be well instructed and certain about their duties in breaking into zugs and reforming squadrons from zugs.

'(*k*) The true principles for all marches in line will be strictly observed; there will be no dressing by eye, and the 3rd zug leader[1] will not conform to any vacillations of the 1st and 2nd zug leaders.

'(*l*) Under all circumstances the rear rank will keep a good pace from the front rank, and never close up or override it; it will ride as independently as the front rank, and

[1] I.e. the leader of the directing zug.

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at the gallop will keep at the least two or three good paces from it.

'I affirm that when a person of experience sees that these fundamental principles are strictly observed by a squadron he will arrive at the conviction that it has been thoroughly grounded and welded together by its leader; it only remains then to conduct the inspection drill so as to exhibit as clearly as possible the thoroughness of its instruction. Even with a perfectly instructed squadron much, if not all, may be spoiled by the manner of conducting the drill; and, on the other hand, by an adroit leader many faults in the training may be concealed and glossed over, especially if the inspecting officer be inexpert.

'Much will depend upon the leader—how he carries himself in front of his squadron, whether he rides briskly and smartly or rushes about wildly and without purpose, whether his horse is well in hand and is swift and handy. Further, the result will be much affected by the leader's giving his commands at the right place, from which he can be heard simultaneously by all; by his giving the cautionary words smoothly, and not hurriedly, so as not to disturb his men, the executive commands (which must not follow too quickly) being short, energetic, and well accented, so that the movement may be performed in a suitable manner; if these commands be given in a drawling and indolent tone they will be carried out in a lax and sleepy manner.

'These are the demands made on the leader for each movement, even the simplest; if he does his utmost and puts his whole heart and soul into the work, he will get his men to pay attention, to take an interest in what they have to do, and to display the liveliest zeal and activity: emulation will be excited, so that the very highest conditions may be fulfilled. Naturally every squadron leader who has trained his men with intelligence and thoroughness will wish to present his squadron in the most favourable manner, and to exhibit their good qualities to the greatest advantage, and this he will succeed in doing if only he carries out the principles on which the favourable showing up of a squadron must depend.'

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CHAPTER VIII.

THE TRAINING AND INSTRUCTION OF THE REGIMENT.

Efficiency of regiment depends on the manner in which the squadrons have been instructed — What constitutes an efficient cavalry corps? — Possible diversity of opinion upon this point — Common faults and defects showing imperfect training of squadrons — Necessity of a clear and definite standard of efficiency at which to aim — Enumeration of exercises and manœuvres to which special attention should be paid—Von Schmidt's instructions for manœuvring one squadron against another—One more useful exercise to be practised.

It is perhaps only enunciating a truism to say that if the efficiency of the squadron depends upon the manner in which the individual men and horses who make it up are trained, the efficiency of the regiment as a tactical unit no less depends upon the degree of efficiency to which each of the squadrons composing it can be brought. If each squadron, before taking its place on the regimental parade, has been well drilled and well instructed and led, the training of the regiment as a whole is, for an officer possessed of a little experience and common sense, and where there is favourable ground and sufficient space for manœuvres and parades, a comparatively easy task. If, however, on the other hand, as has been too much the case up to a recent period in our own cavalry, the squadron leaders have, owing to well-known causes, had but little opportunity of training their own troops or squadrons in a really thorough manner, the comparatively short time often at the disposal of the commanding officer for the instruction of the regiment as a whole

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is much curtailed, inasmuch as his efforts are constantly checked and delayed by the necessity of correcting faults and irregularities, which with really well-trained squadrons would rarely occur.

What, then, constitutes an efficient cavalry corps? This again is a point upon which, inasmuch as standards of efficiency differ, much diversity of opinion is sure to exist. But in any case an experienced critic has always learnt the necessity of looking below the surface. He knows full well that a cavalry corps may acquit itself fairly enough when marching past, or on parade ground, upon which it is accustomed to drill, may go through a field day or even a course of summer manœuvres creditably enough, may have a fair reputation for smartness and general turn out, and yet be found, when tested by a really practical standard, to be deficient in many of the qualifications it should have if it is to be ready at any time to take the field and to play its part worthily and well in any position in which on active service it may find itself placed.

For instance, it may be that in a regiment such as has just been described many of the men and horses are imperfectly trained, that some of the latter will not readily leave the ranks unless accompanied by one or two others. It may be that when advancing over rough and broken ground, or that when a small ditch a few feet wide or a fence 2 feet high or so is met with which has to be crossed, while at the trot or at the gallop, either from want of practice or imperfect training, a good proportion of horses either refuse the leap or have to be fought over it, and are necessarily left behind, while others break the ranks and rush or blunder impatiently over it, and thus the troops or squadrons are thrown into confusion and their cohesion is for a time utterly destroyed. It may be that the squadron officers have not been given frequent opportunities of drilling and manœuvring the whole regiment in the field, and are therefore liable to make mistakes and miscalculations at a critical moment, which a little more practice would have easily enabled them to avoid. Once more; it may be that oppor-

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tunities of riding out of the ranks and using their arms at any speed, and so gaining confidence in themselves and their horses, have been seldom afforded to the men, or that perhaps such opportunities have been limited to an occasional spurt of 2 or 3 minutes at an adjutant's or commanding officer's parade, when nothing is easier than for any clumsy, careless, or awkward man to escape notice in the crowd. Many other defects showing imperfect training of the squadrons will often be found to exist, but these will suffice.

As has just been said, opinions will probably differ as to the precise qualifications which will entitle a regiment to be deemed a really well-trained and efficient corps. On one point, however, there can be but little doubt—viz. that as in training a troop or squadron so also in training a regiment in those exercises which are likely to be of practical use, it will always be useful for the commander to have before him a clear and definite standard at which to aim. It need hardly be added that if any real excellence is to be attained this standard should be a high one.

Putting aside for the moment the ordinary parade movements and riding-school work, which every cavalry corps is supposed to do more or less well, the following exercises are suggested as being some of those to which special attention should be paid, and which every cavalry corps which has any claim to be called practically efficient should do thoroughly well.

There is nothing new about them, inasmuch as they are all more or less fully prescribed in the 'Cavalry Regulations,' but attention is here drawn to them because of the importance which, in the opinion of the writer, should be attached to them.

Long and rapid advances in small column formations.

In these days of long ranges, when long stretches of ground have often, even under the most favourable circumstances, to be covered by cavalry when advancing to the attack, too much importance cannot be attached to the steady practice of long advances in line or squadron column

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over any reasonable ground at a rapid and uniform pace. In Continental armies, where the necessity of being ever ready for war is naturally far more felt than with us, the great importance of having cavalry in good condition and wind, so as to be able to attack the enemy even after a long preliminary advance, has long been recognised, and such movements are, especially in the German cavalry, sedulously practised. In our own cavalry service these long advances are seldom continuously practised, and that for several reasons. In the first place, the necessity of them is naturally less urgently felt than abroad. Secondly, it has always been more or less an article of faith in the British cavalry that a smart regiment implies sleek and fat horses. Thirdly, there are in the United Kingdom, with the exception of 1 or 2 of our larger military stations, few places where there is ground or space enough available for such exercises. There can be no doubt that in several Continental armies the cavalry works habitually much faster than our own, and at their annual manœuvres (the German cavalry, for instance) may often be seen to advance over long distances at a rapid, uniform pace, which after 10 minutes or so would leave the majority of the British cavalry regiments far behind. This is not because their men and horses are better than ours—on the contrary, our men are at least quite as good, and our horses, as a rule, far better than theirs—but simply because in some foreign armies the cavalry is worked harder, and therefore the horses are habitually in far better condition for work than ours.

In such exercises as these, which it need hardly be said presupposes the near presence of an enemy, it is essential that a regiment should be in such a formation as to admit of a rapid deployment into line. Continental cavalry regiments possess exactly such a formation in their squadron columns, but the British cavalry is scarcely so fortunate. With our weak troops and squadrons the best available formation is perhaps the column of fours, inasmuch as it is handy, can be wheeled in any direction, and can generally traverse broken ground. The advantages of our squadron column for this

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purpose may, for reasons which will be found detailed in another chapter, be considered as somewhat doubtful.

The importance of a regiment being thoroughly trained to make long advances in good order at a rapid pace is realised when the student reflects that on the manner in which this practice is carried out depends the proper execution of the attack in line, which is the final object and aim of all offensive action of cavalry. In order to enable squadrons in regiments to pass over long stretches of ground and to get their horses into good wind, very gradual and steady practice is required, so as to ensure that the horses do not lose condition.

The Attack.

With regard to the observations just made as to long distances being covered in the attack at the several paces, and the manner in which the attack might be regulated, the instructions given for the guidance of the German cavalry by the late famous General von Schmidt may here be usefully quoted.

'It is of the highest importance to regulate the attack properly. The horses must reach the adversary in good wind, and with their full powers, so as to be able to pursue a flying enemy or to resist any intact body immediately after the former has been charged. It must therefore be a fixed principle not to assume the increased pace until we are certain that the enemy cannot be reached at a slower pace, or when we have approached him so closely as to be able to run him down by the shock of a charge, or when, in the attack on infantry, we have entered the sphere of most effective fire.

'For peace manœuvres we may take as the rule to begin the attack at the walk, then pass to the trot, which must be continued for about 1,000 paces, and then commence the gallop; the last must be kept up for 600 paces, or in the attack on infantry for 800 paces. The charge on the command "March! march!" will be of 120 to 150 paces duration.

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'The time required for the attack would accordingly be as follows:—

1,000	paces at the	trot	= 3	mins.	20	secs.
600	,,	gallop	= 1	,,	12	,,
150	,,	charge	= 0	,,	9	,,
Total 1,750			= 4	,,	41	,,

'Against infantry we require—

800	paces at the	trot	= 2	mins.	40	secs.
800	,,	gallop	= 1	,,	36	,,
150	,,	charge	= 0	,,	9	,,
Total 1,750			= 4	,,	25	,,

'This will be the normal attack at the present time, in which the trot takes the chief place. Of course some variation in these figures would be caused by accidents of the ground and other circumstances.'

In practising the actual attack on brigade or regimental parades the attack or charge in line often has the appearance of being delivered somewhat 'in the air,' and to have no distinct or definite character. Squadrons, moreover, at the moment of the final rush may often be seen to spread out in the flanks, and consequently the attack, instead of being delivered by a close, compact line, is badly executed, and may be said to be more or less of a failure.

In order to obviate or to minimise such faults and shortcomings as these it will be found a useful practice to place 2 or 3 men to represent the enemy at such a distance apart as will exactly correspond to the front (including intervals) of the force which is going to attack. For instance, if the attack is to be made by 3 squadrons—say, of 36 files—the normal breadth of front of this force, including the 2 intervals of 12 yards, would be 132 yards. If these markers, representing the enemy, are placed that distance apart—say, at 800 or 1,000 yards or so—in front of the attacking force, the latter should be led direct upon them, and the charge, or (if the charge is not actually made) the gallop, should be

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sounded some 150 or 200 yards before reaching the interval between the markers. If the attack has been well and correctly made the 3 squadrons should pass between the markers. If the flank squadrons overlap the markers, and if the men when passing between them are in more than 2 ranks, the attack has been badly executed, and should be done again. This method of practising a charge is quite as useful for a single squadron as for a regiment. It enables a squadron leader or a commanding officer to gauge very accurately the manner in which his squadron or squadrons are led, teaches the men to avoid riding with loose files, and makes them deliver their attack in a close and compact mass.[1]

It is hardly necessary to say that no commander, whether he is instructing or practising a squadron or regiment, can judge properly of how an attack is made, or point out the faults made in its execution, if he rides with it. His best point for observation will always be some 50 or 60 yards beyond the markers upon whom the charge is made, and midway between them. From this point no shortcoming need escape him.

The break up and subsequent rally of the squadrons after the charge.

It has long been an axiom with all good cavalry leaders that the most dangerous moment for cavalry is after the charge. Consequently order and cohesion, even though the latter may be of a rough and ready kind, cannot be too quickly re-established, so as to be ready for any emergency which may occur.

An attacking body, whether it be a squadron or a regiment, which has charged has only 4 cases or suppositions to deal with.

The movements and leading of the attacking body after

[1] When a single squadron is directed to charge in this manner, the markers should be placed 2 or 3 yards further apart than the actual breadth of the squadron, as there are no squadron intervals to afford room and play for some little opening out of the files, which is inevitable in the attack. Thus for a squadron of 36 files some 39 to 40 yards should be allowed.

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the charge should be regulated according to the case which is supposed.

These 4 cases, and the manner in which they should be dealt with, are pointed out by General von Schmidt as follows :— [1]

'An attacking body which has charged has only the following movements to choose between :—

'1. The attack has succeeded ; the enemy has not waited to receive it, but avoided it. After "Charge" and "Trot," "Halt," the flank squadrons pursuing on the sound "Fanfaro," while some squadrons follow in compact order.

'2. The attack has succeeded, and the mêlée follows, the enemy having accepted the attack. After "Charge" open out for individual combat, to mark the mêlée ; afterwards, the enemy being considered worsted, the sound "Fanfaro," whereupon the flank squadrons pursue in dispersed order. All the rest rally as rapidly as possible in a forward direction on the call ("Ruf") in rear of the leaders, following the pursuing squadrons at the trot in compact order.

'3. The mêlée takes place, but it does not succeed. On the sound "Appel" all ride to the rear *en débandade*, rallying on the sound "Front" to the flank and rear of the next intact line, which advances to disengage the repulsed troops.

'4. We do not accept the attack, as the enemy is too superior.

'Pass from the attack gallop to the trot, and retire at that pace, on the signal "Retire," to the flank of the 2nd line, fronting and forming on it, so as to advance again to the attack when thus reinforced.'

In our own Regulations only two of these cases are dealt with—viz. a successful and an unsuccessful attack. I will therefore confine my remarks to these.

After the charge the troops pass to the trot by trumpet sound ; then, the halt being sounded, the command 'Break up' is given. Hereupon a thorough break up of the squadrons takes place, as would be the case in a real hand-to-hand fight. If the attack is deemed to have been successful the

[1] *Instructions for Cavalry*, Von Schmidt, pp. 168-9.

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'rally is then sounded.' According to our Regulations the men at this sound at once form up in their proper places. In the German service, under similar circumstances, there is no halt, but the men rally as quickly as possible in rear of the leader (who indicates at once by his sword and the position of his horse the direction to be taken), without much reference to their proper places in the squadron; all that is required of each man is that he should join his own zug. The 'rally,' moreover, is effected at the trot and gallop, both in a forward and, indeed, in every direction except to the rear, and never at the halt. These directions are generally oblique to the front and the flank, and the regimental commander generally works after the charge in accordance with a previously formed idea. Without being by any means a blind admirer of everything German, I may say that there is no doubt that a smart German cavalry regiment rallies to the front with closed ranks with marvellous rapidity, and their men being quicker in rejoining the ranks, and always rallying forward at a quick pace, they do it quicker than the majority of our regiments. This is owing to two causes—viz. that their men are generally somewhat better trained than ours, and also because their method of rallying after the charge is more practical than ours.

'That cavalry remains master of the field and gains the victory which can most quickly rally and reform.'

In practising this rally it should be impressed upon the subaltern officers that they should at once ride out of the mêlée and move well forward, raising their swords so as to be seen easily by the men.

With regard to the second case provided for in our Regulations—viz. an unsuccessful charge—the men on the sound 'Retire' move while the squadrons are broken up at a steady pace to the rear, keeping a general alignment but without reference to their proper places in squadron. On the rally being sounded the squadrons at once reform to their original front. This manœuvre should frequently be carried out, on account of the practice which it gives the men in rallying quickly after a retirement.

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In the German cavalry a pretended retreat is often practised for the purpose of inducing the enemy to pursue in loose order. This also affords the men good practice in rallying quickly. The manner in which this manœuvre is carried out is as follows :—

During the advance the signal 'Retire' is sounded, which warns the men that 'Front' will follow (otherwise the 'Appel' would be sounded). Upon this sound the men turn left about independently and retire in loose order at full gallop ; on the subsequent signal 'Front' each man promptly turns left about to the front, and each squadron closing together, an attack in line follows, so as unexpectedly and with a compact front to fall upon and overthrow the enemy, who would probably be in dispersed order. These tactics were frequently practised by the Prussian cavalry in 1806, 1814, and 1866, to the great discomfiture of the enemy.

The following exercises may also be suggested as being those in which it is important that a cavalry corps should be thoroughly trained :—

Changes of direction both from column and line, with or without word of command ;

Rapid deployment both from column of troops and also after passing a defile, &c. ;

Manœuvring 1 wing or squadron of a regiment against another, whenever ground or space permits of it ;

Pursuit of the enemy by flank squadrons.

If, in addition to doing all these exercises well, a regiment has a good knowledge of outpost and dismounted duty, a well-instructed body of pioneers, and can shoot pretty well, it may fairly claim to be a practically efficient corps in the field.

With regard to the manœuvring of one wing or squadron of the regiment against another, to which reference has just been made, the instructions given and the principles laid down by General von Schmidt are so clear and practical that the writer thinks he cannot do better than quote them here verbatim. They are just as applicable to a British as a German squadron.

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'The tactical instruction of the squadron divides itself into 3 periods :—

'The 1st period embraces merely the instructions laid down in the Regulations.

'The 2nd is limited to movements having reference to the front and flanks, at the most to 3 fronts, and in this we approach the working out of a fighting idea, especially as regards the attack, as has been laid down for the inspection of a squadron.

'In the 3rd period a real situation in warfare is supposed, such as would probably occur in reality, in which all the separate movements would be at command ; and this is the most instructive for both officers and men. During the last portion of the spring drills particular orders should be given to the squadron leaders on the ground, either to each separately or to 2 of them (who will work against each other), or to more, who will mutually support each other in a definite object and take part in the fight with the squadrons engaged with the enemy.

'These, then, would be the exercises in the 3rd period of instruction :—

'1. As to the duties of the squadron leader in the 1st case, where there is a supposed enemy, even if the practice be of the very simplest nature, a distinct idea must be borne in mind, so as to simulate what would occur in reality.

'2. In the 2nd case, where two squadrons work against each other, one should proceed somewhat as follows :—two squadrons would be placed as far as possible apart in two opposite corners of the ground, on a diagonal either in line on the ground itself, or in columns of route on the roads leading to the ground. From these points the squadrons, without surrendering their lines of retreat, which lie directly to the rear of their positions, should march on and manœuvre against each other, so as to gain each other's flanks and charge them. Each leader should endeavour to force his opponent to make certain manœuvres, and not allow the adversary to compel him to make them.

'It must be a fixed principle that the line should not be

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broken into column after arriving within 500 paces of the opponent.

'It will rarely happen that the two lines will come so exactly opposite each other in the attack that their flanks will be opposite each to each; in most cases there will be some overlapping on one flank, and then it will be the duty of every zug leader, when he foresees that this will be the case, to take the initiative on his own account, and so lead his zug that it does not charge in the air, but falls on the flank and rear of the adversary, for 10 men on the flank do more than 100 in front.

'3. When separate orders are given to several (generally 2) squadrons, but tending to the same end, the squadrons having to give each other mutual assistance against 1 or 2 other squadrons, the principles mentioned in paragraph 2 will generally be applicable. In this case 1 squadron would follow the other as 2nd line at a distance of 250 to 300 paces, either outflanking or directly in rear of the 1st line, but not nearer than the above distance, so as not to be involuntarily drawn into the fight of the 1st line. So long as the 1st line is not yet engaged, the 2nd follows its movements; when the former is actually engaged, the 2nd line supports it either by detaching to it a portion of its men, so as to decide the victory by falling on the flank and rear of the adversary, or by holding itself in readiness to cover the retreat of the 1st line, and attacking the opponent in flank while he is pursuing it. But the whole of the 2nd line must never be thrown into the fight of the 1st line if there is no 3rd line; otherwise it would fail in its object, which is to support the 1st line.

'There should be frequent combats of this sort of several squadrons against each other; and squadron leaders should picture to themselves that every movement of the squadron should represent an idea, an intention of the leader—an idea either just or false, decided or vague, which latter would show that the leader does not exactly know what to do. This is the worst fault in a cavalry officer; it is better to stand fast than to rush about here and there, to advance and

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retire again, and generally execute undecided and confused movements.'

In conclusion, it may be remarked that another very useful exercise for teaching troop and squadron leaders to bring up their squadrons with precision and exactitude to any required point is the putting out by the commanding officers of markers (according to regulation) at any point on the field, and then directing one of the squadron or troop leaders to take up the regiment either in line, quarter-column, or in any other formation into the new position. In doing this special attention should be paid to the regiment being brought up to the required point by the shortest route, and in the simplest manner, and in the most handy formation, and being halted at the right time and place. There will then be no shuffling, passaging, or reining back of the squadrons after the command 'Halt' has been given in order to bring the regiment into its proper position. Simple as this may appear, it is surprising how many mistakes, both upon the part of officers and men, often have to be corrected when this exercise is carried out.

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CHAPTER IX.

DUTIES OF CAVALRY ON THE ACTUAL BATTLE FIELD.

The theory that the day of cavalry on the actual battle field has gone by evidently meets with no support from the chief Continental military Powers—Charge of the German cavalry at Mars-la-Tour—Results obtained by it—Enumeration of the duties of cavalry on the actual battle field—Divisional cavalry on the actual battle field—Its task and duties, &c. &c.

As is well known, there have for the last decade been plenty of critics who have never ceased to pronounce oracularly that the day of cavalry on the actual battle field has gone by, and who are ready to blame and to deride any exercises or manœuvres in which cavalry is exposed at all to the fire of the modern breech-loading rifle. Into the arguments by which this theory has been supported on the one hand and combated on the other the writer has here no intention to enter. It is worth while, however, to remark that however strong a case the advocates of this theory may appear to have made out, they have hitherto signally failed to impress the great military Powers of Europe with the correctness of their views, inasmuch as in the German, as well as in other armies, not only is the cavalry persistently and laboriously trained, so as to enable it to take an active part on the actual battle field, but the conviction is adhered to that in the teeth of the breech-loader a cavalry charge is not only not an impossibility, but that offensive action may still sometimes be resorted to, so as to obtain great results. In Germany especially the conviction is strongly adhered to that cavalry has a great future part to play on the actual battle field. The Germans, indeed, have not, it is true, many instances of

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such results having been obtained during their last campaign to point to, but they have at any rate one actual experience, and that a notable one, to advance in support of their views. I refer, of course, to the action of the 3rd and 5th cavalry divisions and the two regiments of dragoon guards during August 16 at Mars-la-Tour. One episode of this day's fighting, viz. the charge of the 7th German Cuirassiers and the 16th Lancers, may here be quoted from the official narrative, where this exploit is so finely described in effective terms.

'It was only 2 P.M., the day yet young; no infantry and no reserves, and the nearest support a long way off. . . . Now was the time to see what a self-sacrificing cavalry could do. . . .

'Bredow saw at a glance that the crisis demanded an energetic attack, in which the cavalry must charge home, and, if necessary, should and must sacrifice itself. The 1st French line' (breech-loaders and all) 'is ridden over; the line of guns is broken through, teams and gunners put to the sword. The 2nd line is powerless to check the vigorous charge of horse. The batteries on the heights further in rear limber up and seek safety in flight. Eager to engage and thirsting for victory, the Prussian squadrons charge even through the succeeding valley, until after a career of 3,000 paces they are met on all sides by French cavalry. Bredow sounds the recall. Breathless from the long ride, thinned by the enemy's bullets, without reserves, and hemmed in by hostile cavalry, they have to fight their way back. After some hot mêlées with the enemy's horsemen they once more cut their way through the previously overridden lines of artillery and cavalry, and, harassed by a thick rain of bullets and with the foe in rear, the remnant hastens back to Flavigny. . . . The bold attack had cost the regiments half their strength.'[1]

The German cavalry which advanced to this attack was

[1] See an article on 'Fire Discipline' in 'Fortnightly Review' for December 1883, by Archibald Forbes.

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less than 800 strong. It lost 363 men and 16 officers in the attack. But the action of the German cavalry throughout that day had, as all the world knows, most important results. It arrested the advance of the French troops till supports came up, and to its timely effects may be traced the chain of events which ultimately led to the surrender of Metz.

The actual duties of cavalry during the battle may be described briefly as follows :—

During the preliminary phase which precedes the general engagement the divisions of cavalry which have performed the duties of scouting and reconnaissance are generally kept in advance of the front of the main body, in order to harass as much as possible the movements of the enemy and to mask those of its own army.

As soon as the engagement becomes general they receive orders to clear the front and to take up a position on one or other of the flanks.

During the battle the commander of the cavalry, while strictly conforming to the general instructions which he has received, should nevertheless not let go by any chances which may present themselves when the cavalry may play a really efficient part during the action.

It may be that during the action he may have to carry out one or other of the following duties :—

1. To endeavour to gain the flanks or even the rear of the enemy with the horse artillery batteries belonging to the cavalry, in order to make a diversion in these directions.

2. To aid and support every manœuvre which has for its object to outflank the enemy's line.

3. To oppose any similar manœuvre of the enemy, or at any rate to give notice of and retard it to the utmost of his power.

4. To oppose resolutely every offensive movement of the enemy's cavalry.

5. To fill up provisionally any gaps which may be made in the line of battle.

6. Finally, to send out detachments in the directions from which bodies of the enemy are expected to arrive on

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the field of battle, and to delay their onward march by all the means in his power.

If the enemy is victorious the cavalry must sacrifice itself, in order to gain time, and should do its best to retard by its charges the pursuit of the enemy.

If its own army is victorious the cavalry should vigorously take up the pursuit, should endeavour to gain the flank of the enemy's columns in retreat, should harass them by every means in its power, should break by the fire of its horse artillery the last semblance of resistance, and should make every effort to convert the retreat into a rout: in any case it should never lose touch of the enemy.

Divisional cavalry fulfils during the battle in its own limited sphere of action duties corresponding to those which the other cavalry divisions or brigades fulfil for the whole army. Owing, however, to the comparatively restricted scope of its duties, the initiative left to its chief is restricted within narrower limits.

At the beginning of a battle it is often employed to support the divisional artillery, especially when the latter has to advance and take up a position which is too far ahead to admit of its being protected by the infantry.

If the divisional cavalry has been posted so as to be able to take advantage of any chance of action which may turn up in the combat, and if it has been sheltered from the view of the enemy, it may often happen that its appearance at a given point on the battle field will produce a great effect and bring about important results.

In the event of success or retreat the divisional cavalry joins the other cavalry divisions, in order to join in the pursuit or to cover the retreat.

Likewise the divisional cavalry may be temporarily employed for any object which may have been determined on, either before, during, or after the battle.

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CHAPTER X.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

General principles for the combat—Duties of the cavalry commander—Opportunities for charging comparatively rare—The most favourable opportunities for executing charges against cavalry, artillery, and infantry—Line and column formations—Changes of direction—Nature of ground which affords the most favourable scope for action—Proper time to deploy—Importance of squadron scouts—The manner in which the charge should be made—The rally—Importance of keeping on hand a reserve, &c. &c.

BEFORE proceeding to consider the actual tactical formations which are best suited to the success of cavalry on the battle field it will be well to devote a few pages to the consideration of the general principles which should guide the conduct of cavalry when fighting on the field.

These principles are well defined, and may be stated in general terms as follows :—

1. Owing to the range and precision of modern artillery fire cavalry should only appear on the battle field in formations which admit of a rapid deployment. Short, handy, and flexible lines of columns are the formations which best answer these requirements.

When cavalry is called upon to manœuvre in the field its movements should be of the simplest kind. Owing to a tardy recognition of this fact the majority of the useless and complicated manœuvres which used to be much in vogue, and which it was the custom to practise so assiduously, have now in a great measure disappeared from the cavalry regulations of most European armies.

2. The leader of a cavalry force ought never to hesitate to take the initiative in the attack. Cavalry above all is the

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arm which must be used when the favourable moment occurs. This moment, when once missed, is not likely to recur, and the attack must then be indefinitely put off. Every commander, in fact, who lets pass the opportunity for action is always liable to incur the heaviest reproach which can fall upon a cavalry leader, viz. that of being 'too late.'

Hence it will not do for him to remain inactive close to his troops. While he keeps the latter, if possible, sheltered from fire in a position where they can await the moment for action, he should take up his post where he can watch with the greatest attention the turns and fluctuations of the fight, and should endeavour to judge from what he sees the place and moment when he can intervene and come into action with the best chances of success.

3. The opportunities for charging in the real sense of the word have become more rare in proportion as the zone swept by artillery and infantry fire is enlarged, and as the intensity, rapidity, and precision of fire have increased. It is, however, much to be regretted that the manner in which the cavalry has been handled in some recent campaigns has done much to encourage the theory and belief that the day of cavalry on the actual battle field is virtually over. The real truth is, that to the end of time there will be emergencies when cavalry which will charge home and sacrifice itself may charge with effect, and it should never be allowed to forget that this is its ultimate *raison d'être*. There certainly is a risk that it may do so if the cavalry is too often kept hovering round the fringe of operations and too carefully shielded from fire.[1]

[1] With a notable callousness to the effect of breech-loading fire against infantry, the Russians were singularly chary, in their Turkish campaign, of exposing their cavalry to it. In the Zulu war, with tempting opportunities, but a very scanty use was made of our cavalry force for the purposes of fighting in the field, and the only occasion on which our cavalry was called prominently into action during our campaign in Afghanistan could scarcely be called a success. On the other hand, the moonlight charge at Kassassin was an example of effective work, and we have lately had the charge against the retreating Arabs at El Teb.

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The most favourable occasions for executing a charge against the different arms are well known, and may therefore here be stated as briefly as possible.

Against cavalry: when it is encountered where the conformation of the ground does not allow of its deployment, when it is issuing from a defile with a narrow front, and when it is possible to surprise it in column formation before it has time to form line to the front or in the direction which offers the best chances of success, or when the enemy's cavalry is itself occupied in charging another body, it may be advantageously taken in flank, and finally when it is in the act of changing formation, &c. &c.

Against artillery: if cavalry can surprise artillery on the march, or when retreating, or at the moment when it is taking up its position preparatory to opening fire, &c.

Against infantry: the charge offers the best chances of success in cases when the troops against which it is to be made have just previously been much shattered by artillery or infantry fire, or if the infantry is in complete rout or in disordered retreat, or if it has apparently exhausted all its ammunition, &c.

Finally, every charge, no matter against which arm it is delivered, is made more advantageously if it is delivered unexpectedly and upon one of the enemy's flanks.

4. Cavalry fights in line, and always manœuvres in column, except in cases where the formation in line is employed in preference, in order to diminish the losses which might otherwise be caused by artillery fire. When there is an extended line of cavalry it may not be always advantageous to place them under cover, although one thus deprives oneself of the advantage of taking the enemy by surprise. If a body of cavalry remains in line it naturally will not be able to advance with the same rapidity as in column with a narrow front, and a long line almost invariably wavers and oscillates, and is therefore very likely to lose its cohesion during a long advance. In addition to this the line formation is much less handy than the column in changes of front and direction. Column formations alone

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enable cavalry promptly to gain the point from which to begin the attack, and to impart to it at the right moment the most advantageous direction. This formation also enables the squadrons to profit by the accidents of ground, and thus furnishes it with the chance of surprising the enemy. The formation in line, on the other hand, assures the cavalry the entry into action of all its available sabres, as well as the greatest speed of which the horses are capable in the attack, and is also employed by preference to diminish the losses which might otherwise be caused by artillery fire.

5. Cavalry squadrons, whether acting alone or as part of a large or small cavalry force, ought to be able to change their direction or their pace, and even to deploy, without any noise either of words of command or trumpet sounds. A simple sign made by their leaders, such as a wave of the sword, ought to suffice to guide them even when the line is of considerable extent.

The mistake is often made of supposing that a flat, open, and unintersected country offers cavalry the best field for action. This may possibly be the case when fighting with such foes as Egyptians, Zulus, or Afghans, &c. &c.; but when opposed to really highly trained troops—that is, infantry which can shoot and highly trained gunners—it is just on such ground that the enemy's artillery and infantry would exercise its most deadly effects. It should be borne in mind, moreover, that on such ground the sudden and unexpected entry of cavalry into action is impossible. The truer view of the case is that cavalry will generally find its most favourable sphere of action in a country which is undulating, and which from various features affords plenty of cover.

The deployment, or the change (either by wheeling into line or otherwise) from a column to a line formation, should be made at the right time. The disadvantages of assuming the line formation too soon or too late are apparent enough. If the deployment is put off too long, the attacking body exposes itself to the danger of being attacked before this formation, so necessary as a preliminary to the attack,

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has been begun, or while it is being carried out. On the other hand, if it is made too soon there is less chance of being able to conceal oneself from the view of the enemy; all hope of taking the enemy by surprise must be given up, and it will nearly always be necessary to make changes of direction, which will diminish the cohesion of the attacking line and impair and weaken the shock of the charge.

6. The charge should be preceded by a reconnaissance of the ground over which it is to take place.

Though this is considered nowadays an essential precaution to take, which it would be unpardonable to omit, it is remarkable that only quite recently the necessity of it has been fully recognised, though numberless instances may be recorded in former campaigns of bold and brilliant charges having ended in failures and disasters from neglecting to reconnoitre the ground. Every body of cavalry, large or small, should always send out scouts to its front and flanks. These scouts should go forward to a considerable distance, but should always remain in view of the squadron. When, therefore, the configuration of the ground admits of it they can go 1,000 yards or more ahead.

They should protect their own squadrons from any surprise which might otherwise await them, and examine if the ground is practicable; when there are features in the latter which prevent or render difficult the passage of cavalry they warn the main body by means of known signals, according as circumstances demand. In exceptional circumstances non-commissioned officers may be sent forward as scouts, and even officers when there is a question of crossing a much intersected country.

7. The most effective charge is that which is directed against the flanks or the rear of the enemy. General von Schmidt, in his 'Instructions,' lays special emphasis upon the fact that 10 men on the flank do more than 100 in front. If it is only possible to charge the front of the enemy an endeavour should be made to outflank one of his wings. In every case the attack which will give the greatest chances of success will be that which is delivered against the front and

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flanks simultaneously. Indeed, it often happens that a flank attack carried out unexpectedly, though with very inferior forces, has the effect of totally overthrowing the enemy.

In order that the shock of a charge should have the greatest effect it is always advisable for a cavalry leader to endeavour to avail himself of a field of attack which has but little depth. When this condition of success is wanting, as, for example, in vast open plains, it is absolutely necessary to regulate the distances to be traversed in the advance to the attack at the several paces in a rational and tolerably definite manner. As a general rule in very open ground the attack should be begun at about 1,500 paces from the objective point. About 800 paces of this distance are traversed at the trot, the following 600 at the gallop, and the last 100 at the charge. When the charge is made against infantry it will be preferable to begin the gallop at 800 paces.[1]

8. The prompt and quick rally after the charge is essentially necessary even for the victor. A successful attack completely disorganises the ranks of the cavalry force which executes it, and it is only when rallied again that it is fit for anything as a fighting body. This disorder, which is but of short duration in a small body of cavalry, often lasts for hours where large masses of cavalry are engaged, because large numbers of riderless horses scour the battle field and a great many men have lost their arms in the mêlée. It may be said, then, that a large body of cavalry, when once engaged, escapes from the control of its leaders for an indefinite time.

9. It need hardly be said that a body of cavalry should always, before making an attack, provide for itself a reserve. The duty of the latter is to protect the flanks of the attacking

[1] The above are about the distances for each pace which are prescribed and practised in the German cavalry. In the Russian cavalry regulations it is prescribed that against infantry the trot begins at 2,000 paces and the gallop at 800. In the French cavalry regulations of May 31, 1882, which have replaced those of 1876, it is laid down that, in order to keep the horses in good wind, the cavalry should be accustomed, without being distressed, to traverse at the gallop, without stopping, 6 kilometres, i.e. more than 3¾ miles.

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body against any force of the enemy which may threaten them, to make a flank attack by way of backing up the movements of the main body, and sometimes to charge in pursuit of the enemy. A regiment holds at least a squadron in reserve, whereas larger bodies of cavalry undertake the attack in the two- or three-line formation.

In a cavalry combat which fluctuates to and fro with varying chances success is often finally secured by the intervention of a body which, though comparatively small, retains its compact order and cohesion. A reserve may thus complete and crown the results which have been already obtained.

As a general rule the reserve follows the attacking body at a distance of about 300 paces, and outflanking one of its wings. Every unoccupied detachment of cavalry, which finds itself in the neighbourhood of a body of the same arm which is about to attack the enemy without being supported by a reserve, should at once, without any formal notice or requisition being given, take up and assume the duties of a reserve to the said body. The neglect of this precaution has on many occasions led to fatal consequences. An exception must, of course, be made to this rule when the unoccupied detachment has already received other special orders, or has been purposely placed where it is in order to carry out some special, and it may be more important, tasks.

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CHAPTER XI.

TACTICAL FORMATIONS.

Classification of tactical formations into (1) those used for manœuvring and (2) those used for actual attack—Comparison of the composition of a Continental with a British cavalry squadron—Comparison of British 'squadron column' with formation known under that name in German cavalry—Disadvantages of the former formation—Tactical formations in Continental cavalries—The German formations for a squadron and regiment a fair type of them all—Formations used in German cavalry for manœuvring a squadron—The zug column—The half-column — Method of executing similar manœuvres in British cavalry—Formations used in German cavalry for manœuvring a regiment—Formations of German squadron for actual attack—Method of carrying out various attacks with a squadron—Formations used by a German cavalry regiment for carrying out various attacks—Methods of executing them, &c. &c.

TACTICAL formations of cavalry may be divided under 2 heads, viz.—

1. Formations used for manœuvring ;
2. Formations used for the actual attack.

In comparing the composition of a Continental with that of a British cavalry squadron no one can fail at once to be struck with one feature which is common to the former and deficient in the British squadron.

A French, German, Austrian, or Russian squadron is composed of 4 squads or sections (pelotons or züge), while a squadron of our own cavalry has only 2 such subdivisions, viz. troops.

This division of the squadron into 4 component parts has long been recognised as being for tactical (as well as

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administrative) purposes a very handy and convenient one, inasmuch as it gives great flexibility in drill, and is especially adapted for small-column formations. In our own squadrons, unfortunately, partly owing to our never having adopted the squadron system, and also partly owing to our squadrons being habitually so weak, no such component parts are now to be found. Hence, when it is necessary or desirable to break up a squadron into a column formation recourse must be had to the column of fours, column of sections, double column of sections from the centre of squadrons, or to the squadron column. With our weak squadrons the column of fours is perhaps the best and most practical formation for manœuvre which we have. In this formation, however, a squadron is naturally not nearly so handy or manageable for purposes of manœuvring as it would be if broken up into 4 short columns. For brigade movements the squadron column, as known in our service, has been chosen as being the most suitable formation in which the manœuvres of British regiments in brigade and division drill can be made. It may be doubted whether the choice of this formation is altogether a happy one, inasmuch as it must be obvious that there are valid objections to it. In our cavalry drill the 'squadron column' differs from the 'squadron column,' or squadrons in column of züge,[1] in the German or other Continental cavalry in one very essential particular. When in this formation a British squadron is broken up into 2 component parts. A Continental squadron, however, in squadron column is broken up into 4 parts. Hence a squadron column in our drill, being a column of 2 troops, is almost a perfect square, and it must be evident that a column of such a shape can never be as handy and flexible for making sudden turns and changes of direction either when manœuvring or when making long advances in line (of squadron columns) over, it may be, broken ground as a column of half its breadth and twice its length. Our cavalry drill, therefore, in this important respect, must always compare somewhat unfavourably with that of some Continental

[1] See Plate III. fig. *a*, at the end of the book.

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cavalries. This indeed will, I think, be evident to anyone who takes the trouble to compare, say, the German with our own cavalry drill, or who has experience of the working of both on the field.

In discussing the tactical formations best suited to the actual battle field, it will be better to consider not so much the formations which are possible for our own cavalry Service, according to present regulations, as these may be taken to be well known, but to look at the subject from a somewhat broader point of view, and consider those which are practised generally in the cavalry of Continental armies. In order to do this it will scarcely be necessary to examine the drill of each army in detail, inasmuch as there is a great similarity between them. In point of fact, these regulations being mostly modelled after or based upon the German pattern, the German drill may be taken as a fair type of them all. Taking, then, this drill as a model, let us see which are the chief tactical formations, which may be, and are, with a few trifling differences, practised by Continental cavalry at the present day.

Formations used in German cavalry for manœuvring the squadron.

The two tactical formations which are best adapted for manœuvring the squadron are what are styled in German drill the 'zug column' and the 'half-column'[1] (Plate I., figs. *a*, *b*, and *k*).

The zug column is employed—

1. For advancing towards the enemy or for the ordinary movements of the squadron in any direction.

2. When the squadron, having already gained the enemy's flank, is watching for the favourable moment to reform line by wheeling the züge (or sections) into line in the desired direction, so as to be able to attack.

[1] For all formations of German cavalry mentioned in this chapter see Plate II., at the end of the book.

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3. It is also employed in cases when the squadron, finding itself in front of the enemy, endeavours secretly to gain his flank, and then, by wheeling all the züge into line in the required direction, to make a decisive attack.

In our own cavalry in all these cases the squadron or column of fours would have to be employed, neither of which, as has already been remarked, is so well adapted for these purposes as the 'zug' column.[1]

The half-column ('halb-colonne') is specially adapted for cases where a squadron leader, finding himself face to face with a similar body of the enemy, wishes, while apparently advancing straight against his foes, to get his squadron into such a position as to be able to charge them suddenly in flank.

This manœuvre consists in advancing and inclining to a flank at the same time (Plate I., fig. *k*). As it is very difficult for an adversary at any distance, especially if there is any dust, to distinguish an advance of a squadron or regiment in half-column from one in line, a squadron leader may often succeed in deceiving the enemy and in preventing him from deciding till too late whether the squadron intends to attack him in front or to threaten his flanks.

In our own drill this manœuvre may most conveniently be executed by a squadron when advancing by wheeling the troops quarter right or quarter left, and thus making a forward and a lateral movement at the same time. When the front of the enemy has been thus sufficiently outflanked, the word 'Forward' may be given. Then, after a short interval, and when near enough to the enemy, if the squadron leader brings the right or left shoulders of his squadron well forward in the direction of the enemy and charges at once, he may often succeed in getting home at any rate with half or three-fourths of his squadron upon his opponent's flank. His

[1] There is no convenient column formation in our drill from which a squadron can so rapidly deploy into line to the front as the double column of sections from the centre of squadrons. Unfortunately, however, it is not well adapted for rapid formations to a flank, and this defect prevents it from being generally useful for manœuvring.

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chances of success, of course, will be increased when there is a good deal of dust, and when the advance to the attack has not been too long. It will, of course, be seen that this manœuvre is best adapted for cases when one body of cavalry is opposed to another of about equal strength.

The most useful formations for manœuvre practised by a German cavalry regiment are as follows, viz.:—

1. The regimental column (Plate I., fig. *g*).
2. The line of squadron columns in the following formations, viz. :—
   - (*a*) Facing to the front (Plate I., fig. *a*).
   - (*b*) With the züge half wheeled to the right or left (Plate I., fig. *c*).
   - (*c*) In half-column (Plate I., fig. *b*).
   - (*d*) In échelon of squadrons (figs. *e* and *f*, Plate. I.).
3. Zug column (Plate I., fig. *j*).
4. Half-column (Plate I., fig. *k*).

If the regiment is placed in reserve, and has to await and watch the course of events, it should preserve, as a general rule, the formation of regimental column up to the moment when it is obliged to deploy into line. In employing this formation it will be easier to remain unperceived by the enemy, while retaining the power of making as quickly as possible changes of direction and of front. (When a cavalry force is manœuvring in several lines, the regiment or regiments in first line should remain as long as possible in this formation before forming line of squadron columns, a formation which is adopted as soon as the requisite dispositions preparatory to deployment for actual contact with the enemy have to be made.)

The 'zug column' (like our column of fours) is employed when it is necessary for the regiment, owing to inequalities of ground or other reasons, to advance with a narrow front. This formation may also be made use of when a regiment wishes to gain its adversary's flank, and then by a sudden wheel of the züge into line to charge him. Or it may be resorted to when the regiment advancing to the attack wishes

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to deploy (or wheel into line) its squadrons successively to either the right or the left hand.[1]

The 'half-column' is only employed by a regiment when, having already deployed, it is wished to make a half-wheel to the right or left, in order to make an outflanking movement or to guard against a similar manœuvre which is being attempted by the enemy.[2]

Formations which can be used by a German squadron for the actual attack.

A squadron can charge—

1. In compact order.
2. With extended files.
3. With only one zug with extended files.

The charge in compact order.

The manner of carrying out this charge in the German cavalry is as follows:—

After the preliminary words of command[3] have been given, and at the moment of moving off at the walk, each rear-rank man places himself 2 yards behind his front-rank man (in the Uhlans 3 yards). The command 'Trot' then follows, and at about 700 yards from the objective (or at 800 if the attack is against infantry) the command to gallop is given. Finally, at 100 yards the leader orders the 'Charge' to be sounded ('Marsch! Marsch!') This last sound is repeated by all the trumpeters. Hereupon the whole squadron is launched in full career against the adversary, and the attack is delivered.

The scouts which were sent out to the front, having meanwhile cleared the front of the line of attack, fall in upon

[1] As a matter of fact this manœuvre is scarcely ever practised, as being too slow, and consequently taking up too much time.

[2] The manner in which this may be effected by making a forward and lateral movement simultaneously has been already explained.

[3] These words of command are as follows: 'Eskadron zur Attacke. Vorwärts! Marsch!'

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the flanks of the squadron and join in the charge, while the scouts sent out as flankers maintain their position, and keep a look out.

Charge of the squadron in extended files.

The squadron having approached in line to within some hundreds of yards of the objective, the leader gives the command, 'Charge with extended files' ('Auseinander, Marsch! Marsch!') At this command all the men, without any regard to riding in compact order, dash at full speed upon the enemy, headed by the squadron leader and the zug commanders. The directing zug (the 3rd) alone remains in compact order, and follows in rear at a suitable distance. This charge is employed—

1. To pursue the enemy with a portion of the regiments after an attack which has succeeded, or to come up with cavalry which is unwilling to accept the combat.

2. To charge a swarm of skirmishers, artillery on the march, or batteries in action, which can only be attacked in front. In the latter case the squadron has recourse to extended files before the command to charge is given. The way in which that most important exercise, viz. the rally after the charge, is made has already been described in a former chapter.

The charge with only one zug per squadron in extended files.

The squadron leader commands, 'Such and such a zug with extended files.' The zug leader thereupon gives the command, 'With extended files charge' ('Auseinander, Marsch! Marsch!') Hereupon the zug named opens out its files, so that each rear-rank man is able to come up on the left of his front rank, thus forming a single rank with which to charge the enemy. The squadron—i.e. the three züge—can either follow in rear, covering, if necessary, any gaps which may be made in the attacking zug, or it may advance against the enemy in another direction. The zug which charges is accompanied by a trumpeter.

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This movement is used to pursue the enemy after a successful charge executed by a single squadron, or to allow a squadron which is ready for the attack to guard against the onset of any fresh body of the enemy's cavalry coming upon the scene of action.

Again (and this will be the most frequent case), it may be used with advantage when the enemy's cavalry, having advanced within a few hundred yards to meet the squadron, as if it meant to charge, suddenly endeavours to avoid the encounter. In such a case it would not always be prudent to send the whole squadron in dispersed order in pursuit, because the enemy may have made a feigned retreat, and might turn and oppose a compact body of horsemen to the scattered forces of the squadron.

The rally of the zug which has charged in extended order.

When the pursuit has been pushed far enough, or the enemy faces about in consequence of being hard pressed by the men of the zug which has charged in extended files, it is time to recall the latter. As soon as the 'appel' has sounded the dispersed horsemen hasten to clear the front; each of them turns about and makes for the nearest wing of the squadron. When they have rejoined it they take part with it in its attack in compact order.

Formations used by a German cavalry regiment for the actual attack.

1. 'Charge in line' ('Regiment zur Attacke! Vorwärts! Marsch!') The charge is carried out in the same way described for a squadron in compact order.

2. 'Charge in échelon of squadrons from the right' ('Vom rechten Flügel eskadronsweise Echelon-Attacke!').

The different squadrons advance successively to the front on the command of their leaders.

It is as well to distinguish between the occasions when this formation is employed accidentally or unavoidably, and when it is used designedly.

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The first of these cases happens when, immediately after the passage of a bridge, a road through a wood, or any other defile, it is necessary for the regiment unexpectedly to advance to the attack, without being able to wait for the deployment of all its squadrons into line. In such a case the leading squadron deploys, while the others, forming squadron columns, wheel half-right or half-left, advance till they reach ground where there is room and space to deploy, and charge as soon as possible.

The second case—i.e. when the charge is purposely made in échelon of squadrons—is recommended by the German cavalry Regulations for the attack against infantry. To carry out such an attack the regiment advances at first in a single line; the commander of the regiment decides beforehand what the strength of the attacking échelons should be, and gives specific instructions as to whether they should outflank merely one wing of the enemy or both. The attack is begun by the leading échelon; the other échelons follow, each one taking 100 yards' distance[1] from the one immediately in front, and delivers its attack, in order finally to complete the discomfiture of the enemy, or to endeavour to penetrate the ranks of those bodies of the enemy which are yet unbroken.

The commander of each échelon gives the command to charge at the moment when his troops are not more than 50 yards from the spot where the preceding squadron has broken the enemy's ranks. In practising this movement at manœuvres each échelon should, on its attack, pass 50 yards beyond the point reached by the échelon which preceded it. As soon as all the échelons have delivered their attack they generally reform line upon the leading échelon.

Charge with extended files (or in dispersed order) with one or with several squadrons.

This mode of attack is employed—

1. To pursue the enemy after a successful attack in close order.

[1] In attacking infantry this distance is 200 yards.

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2. Against an enemy who flees in disorder before a charge has been made.

The colonel commands, 'Such a squadron (or the wing squadrons) to the front,' 'Die—Eskadron (Flügel-Eskadron) fall' aus !'

The squadron leader then gives the command, 'Charge with extended files' (or in dispersed order). ('Auseinander, Marsch ! Marsch !') The men are recalled by sounding the 'halt' or the recall ('appel').

The pursuit in dispersed order.

On the 'pursuit' being sounded, all the squadrons advance to the front in loose order; only the squadron of direction remains in compact order, and follows at the trot (as a support) the movements of the squadrons which have charged in loose (or dispersed) order. The rally is effected by sounding the 'halt' or the 'appel' with the subsequent order 'Front.'

It is necessary, when reforming line, to leave room for the squadron of direction, which has remained in compact order, and which comes up into its place in line at the gallop.

It will be seen that many of the exercises and methods which have here been briefly noticed are the same in principle as those which any British regimental or squadron leader who understands how to handle his troops is naturally in the habit of practising. A perusal of this chapter may enable the reader to compare our own tactics, formations, and exercises with those practised by German and also (with slight variations) by regiments and squadrons in the leading Continental armies.

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CHAPTER XII.

THE ADVANCED GUARD.

Primary and essential duties of advanced guard — Actual fighting should be avoided as long as possible—Stage at which fighting or driving back the enemy, in order to see what the enemy is doing, must begin—Ordinary principles upon which advanced guard is formed—Advanced guard should not be too complicated—No real advantage derived from dividing it into too many successive groups —Order of march, strength and composition of advanced guard of a cavalry division of 6 regiments—Formation recommended by Verdy du Vernois—Diagram of said formation, with explanatory remarks —Reasons for employing a brigade as advanced guard of a cavalry division—Various demands upon the strength of this brigade— Principles which should guide the commander of an advanced guard —Qualities required for his duties—Alternative courses of action open to him under various circumstances—Cases in which commander of advanced guard may be forced to act upon the offensive.

THE primary and essential task of the advanced guard, and of the scouts who precede it, is to reconnoitre and to obtain intelligence of the enemy, and not to fight. As long as it can attain these objects without engaging in any combat it should seek to do so, inasmuch as collisions with comparatively small bodies of the enemy retard the march, disquiet the main body in rear, and as a rule lead to no tangible results. It is not until the advanced guard finds itself unable to advance, or until the enemy prevents the scouts and their supports from seeing or ascertaining what is taking place in front, that it should take up its secondary, though no less important duty—viz. of attacking the enemy, driving him back, and seeking to pierce the screen behind which he is endeavouring to conceal his movements. It is on these

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accounts that it is customary in forming the advanced guard to adopt an order of formation in successive groups of gradually increasing strength, a system which affords an opportunity for the more advanced groups to see without being seen, which does not expose too large a number of men at first, allows one to avoid an engagement, if advisable to do so, and finally affords an opportunity of succeeding by progressive efforts.

It seems to me that many writers, in treating of the manner in which an advanced guard should be disposed, are apt to divide it into too many parts. In some cases the number of groups of gradually increasing strength into which the advanced guard is divided is multiplied almost *ad infinitum*. Sometimes, indeed, even the diagrams meant to illustrate the dispositions which are advocated by these writers are not easy to understand. What chance, then, I would ask, would such complicated formations have of being generally understood by the great majority of non-commissioned officers and men when put into practice on active service over a wide extent of country? The result of such intricate arrangements would inevitably be confusion and misapprehension by the different groups of the duties which they were respectively charged to perform. The advocacy of such views as these entails several evil results, of which the more important are as follows: Firstly, it serves to complicate a really simple subject; secondly, it tends to encourage the idea that in forming an advanced guard the indefinite multiplication of groups following each other at certain distances upon which those in front can successively fall back for support confers a real additional strength; thirdly, these ideas, if acted upon, are apt to lead to too great a dissemination of force. Considering, moreover, that, however simply an advanced guard is formed, it is necessary to dispose it in at least three or four successive groups, it is surely unnecessary further to complicate its formation by needlessly adding two or three more to their number.

With regard to the distances to be maintained between the various groups of the advanced guard, it is of course

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impossible to lay down any precise or definite rule. These distances must in each case necessarily depend upon the nature of the country, the strength of the force employed as an advanced guard, the probable proximity or otherwise of the enemy, &c. &c. When one is known to have the advantage in numerical strength, the distances would naturally be less in order to afford the opportunity of promptly taking the initiative in case it may be deemed advisable to attack. In the opposite case, one would naturally increase the distances in order to expose one's troops as little as possible, and to guard against being committed to an engagement against one's will.

What, then, should be the order of march, the strength and composition of the advanced guard of a large cavalry force which should be thrown forward in advance of its own army? These are points upon which there is much divergence of opinion among different writers. This being so, I think that with regard to the first of these points, viz. the order of march, I cannot do better than show as an example a formation prescribed by Verdy du Vernois in one of the supposed operations which he discusses in his well-known work on the cavalry division. The advanced guard in this case is composed of a brigade, and is supposed to be that of a division composed of 3 brigades of 2 regiments each, and a battery of horse artillery attached. (Vide diagram on next page.)

Firstly, 2 squadrons of the leading regiments of the brigade, which are detailed to furnish the scouts and their immediate supports, are sent forward to cover the front as far in advance as is deemed advisable. These are considered by the author whom I quote as perfectly distinct from the advanced guard, which is then formed as shown in diagram on the next page.

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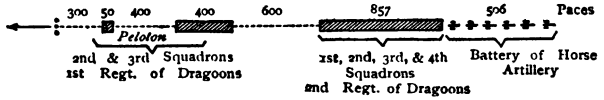
Order of march proposed by Verdy du Vernois for the advanced guard of a cavalry division of 3 brigades of 2 regiments each.



The 1st and 4th squadrons of the 1st Regiment of Dragoons have been sent forward as a body from which to furnish the scouts to cover the front and their supports, &c.

Flankers are thrown out as required from the main body of the advanced guard.

This order of march is simple enough, and the principle upon which it is based would require but slight modification to meet the requirements of nearly every case.

With regard to employing so large a force as a brigade for the advanced guard of a cavalry division, Verdy du Vernois insists upon the necessity of the advanced guard being very considerable, and he expresses his reasons for this opinion as follows :—

'In the majority of cases a regiment will not suffice to perform the service of advanced guard to an isolated cavalry division, and it will be well to employ for that purpose an entire brigade, even when the division is only composed of 2 brigades.'

The reasons which he gives for this opinion may be briefly stated as follows :—

'The division of cavalry which precedes an army ought to reconnoitre the country to a great distance and over a wide lateral extent, inasmuch as it has to cover the whole extent of the front of its own army.

'But it will not be able satisfactorily to fulfil its rôle if it contents itself merely with sending out patrols in its front, which will be forced to fall back whenever they may meet with hostile patrols which may chance to be a little stronger than themselves.

'The object is to ascertain if large bodies of the enemy

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are in the neighbourhood, and in order to do this it is necessary to be sufficiently strong to repulse his small detachments. Hence the necessity of backing up the patrols by supports.

'The strength of these supports (to be sent along the principal routes) ought not to be such as to dislocate the whole division—i.e. one ought not to employ for this purpose entire regiments, but it will be impossible to avoid using at least several squadrons for it.

'It would be useless to lay down any fixed rule beforehand regarding the number of such detachments; that will, of course, depend upon circumstances—upon the number of routes on which the cavalry is marching, and many other conditions.

'It will not, therefore, be possible to foresee at the outset of a campaign to what extent the want of these detachments will make itself felt, but it will nearly always be necessary to employ for these purposes more than a squadron, because the situations in which an isolated cavalry division may often be placed are not so simple as to allow of its marching always on a single route and of its having nothing else to think of except that one route.

'In any case, moreover, in addition to the network of advanced scouts, the division has still need of a regularly formed advanced guard, which should shield it from the necessity of having to deploy its whole strength upon the slightest occasion.

'This advanced guard should have a certain strength, because it forms the first reserve upon which to fall back for the reinforcements which may be immediately necessary in front. Again, it will perpetually happen in the course of a march that a troop or squadron will have to be detached either in this direction or in that from unforeseen causes, &c.'

For all these reasons General Verdy du Vernois considers that a less body than a brigade, after supplying the various calls that have to be made upon it for detachments, would not have a residue of sufficient strength efficiently to fulfil the functions of an advanced guard.

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Principles which should guide the commander of an advanced guard, &c. &c.

The advanced guard of a cavalry force operating in front of an army is, of course, generally composed wholly of cavalry and horse artillery; that of the main body of an army is generally composed of the three arms. Hence the brief remarks which here follow upon the principles which should guide the leader of an advanced guard must not be taken by the reader to refer *exclusively* to the leader of a purely cavalry force.

The duties of the commander of an advanced guard are difficult, and he will often, especially when he comes into contact with the enemy for the first time, find himself in positions which require prudence, calmness, and judgment, as well as quick decision and energetic action.

For instance, the commander of an advanced guard may have received instructions to attack the enemy or to avoid all serious conflict with him, or to follow him up after a successful combat. On the other hand, all these instructions may have to be modified by the tactical position in which one or both adversaries may find themselves when they first meet. The hour of the day should also exercise its influence upon the course of action to be taken, inasmuch as the approach of nightfall is not a favourable time, unless under exceptional circumstances, for undertaking or beginning a serious attack.

When an advanced guard has not received any special instructions the commander of it should generally adopt one or other of the following alternative courses of action, viz.:—

1. He should brush aside all resistance which is only slight.

2. He may remain in an expectant attitude in presence of superior forces, and temporise, so to speak, without committing himself to serious conflict while continuing to observe the movements of the enemy.

3. He may maintain his ground even when attacked by superior numbers.

4. He may fall back before greatly superior numbers

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with sufficient slowness and deliberation to allow the main body the time necessary to deploy, to reach a position which has been fixed on, or to effect the passage of a defile, &c. &c.

When one meets, especially for the first time, an enemy who opposes a vigorous resistance, all experience teaches that it is very difficult to take stock accurately of the forces before one. If the commander has already been informed by means of his scouts (long before the enemy has had time to deploy) that he will meet with an obstinate resistance in front, he will often do well not to attempt more than a reconnaissance. To carry even this out may be a difficult task, especially if the enemy is stationary in a sheltered position and carefully abstains from any offensive movement.

When the enemy maintains an expectant attitude, and does not even bring his artillery into action (even though he has tempting opportunities of doing so) during the preliminary period of reconnaissance which precedes the combat of the advanced guard, the employment by the latter of any artillery it may have at its disposal will often have the effect of provoking the deployment of the enemy's artillery, of revealing its presence, and generally also of marking the main line of his position.

While, on the one hand, it would be a mistake on the part of a commander not to venture to brush aside any resistance which is only slight, on the other hand it would be acting with a rashness which might have disastrous results if he were to bring into action against an adversary equal, or perhaps superior, in numbers his whole available force. Were he to do so the whole of the advanced guard might be completely crushed before the arrival of the main body, and in consequence of this the main body might have to begin the combat under the most disadvantageous conditions.

If the advanced guard itself should be attacked, it should use all its efforts to maintain its position. If closely pressed by the enemy it should not, as a rule, commit itself to a dangerous resistance likely to bring about considerable loss, but should fall back slowly upon the main body, unless the commander-in-chief attaches a very great importance to the

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possession of the position which the advanced guard has taken up.

The cases in which the commander of an advanced guard may be forced to act on the offensive with all his available forces, and without regard to the losses which he may eventually incur, are the following :—

1. When, on arrival at the hither side of a bridge which the main body in rear will have to cross, the advanced guard encounters the enemy, and there is reason to believe that it will be more advantageous to force the passage of it at once by an immediate and vigorous onslaught than to wait to make an attack later, even though with superior forces.

2. When the advanced guard encounters the enemy midway in a defile, such especially as a road through a wood or a mountain defile.

In such a case the advanced guard should endeavour by nergetic offensive action to gain possession of the further issue of the defile.

3. When it meets with the enemy immediately on issuing from a defile.

In such a case the advanced guard should do its utmost, even at the risk of being entirely destroyed, to gain the space necessary for the deployment of the main body at the issue of the defile, and make strenuous efforts to push back the enemy far enough, so that he should not be able by his fire to prevent the deployment of the main body, which is following. It is important, moreover, to secure in front of the issue of the defile some points of vantage, and above all some positions for artillery, in order to be able to repulse the attack made by the enemy and to keep him at bay.

4. When an advanced guard is itself attacked in an unexpected manner. In this case in order to protect the deployment of the main body the advanced guard should, by a counter-attack, seek to check for a time the offensive action of the enemy.

5. When the advanced guard finds itself in presence of an enemy who is careless in protecting himself, and who consequently can be surprised. But in such a case it may

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be well to examine and see (supposing of course that it is possible to mass one's forces out of sight of the enemy, or that the configuration of the ground is favourable to a sudden attack upon him, or will allow the cavalry to have a chance of cutting off his retreat) whether it will not be better to delay the attempt to surprise him till the artillery of the main body can be sent for and has time to come up.

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CHAPTER XIII.

CAVALRY OUTPOSTS.

The subject of outposts already exhaustively discussed by many writers —Necessary and elementary rules, as found in the Cavalry Regulations—Necessity of adopting different systems of outposts under varying circumstances—Enumeration of different systems—Outposts along the frontier at the beginning of a campaign—At a distance from the enemy, during the period of daily marches—Within reach of or in close proximity to the enemy—When stationary, i.e. during a halt of more or less duration—In close contact with the enemy after a fight—As an isolated detachment.

THE subject of outposts generally is a wide one, and many volumes and treatises have been written upon it, in which the whole topic in all its branches has been exhaustively discussed. It may therefore well be deemed difficult to say anything which is very new upon the matter.

But the subject is so all-important for the cavalry arm, as well as so wide and comprehensive, that this volume would manifestly be incomplete if the writer did not make some attempt to deal with it, to distinguish between, and in some degree to formulate, the different systems of outposts which, under different and varying conditions, it has been found advisable to employ, and to place before any young officer who may wish to study this subject as much information upon these points as the limits of a chapter will allow.

The necessary and elementary rules for the efficient performance of outpost duties under ordinary circumstances are dictated by common sense, and the rules and instructions on this subject laid down in our cavalry Regulations may, with a little trouble and industry, be easily mastered by any

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young soldier, either officer or private. To discuss these instructions, which have been issued by authority, and which are well adapted to their purpose, would be unnecessary and out of place. It need only be remarked that instructions such as those found in the cavalry Regulations form the groundwork and A B C of all study of this subject.

It is obvious that the measures to be taken with regard to the placing of outposts vary with the situation in which a force finds itself placed.

At the end of a forward march there are certain fixed rules to be followed which have nothing in common with those which should be observed by a commander after a march in retreat. The measures to be taken have yet another character when a combat of doubtful issue is suspended for the day, and one remains in direct contact with the enemy. In the latter case, indeed, it may be said that no fixed rules at all can be laid down for the guidance of a commander of outposts. Once more it is evident that if a force arrives late at a bivouac to resume the march early the next morning, the system of outposts to be placed and the measures of security to be taken should differ greatly from those to which recourse would be had when a force remains for some time stationary in the presence of the enemy, &c., &c.

Broadly speaking, then, there may be said to be various systems of outposts. The particular system to be adopted depends, as has just been said, upon circumstances and, according as troops find themselves, one or the other of the following positions, viz.:—

Firstly, along the frontier at the beginning of a campaign ;

Secondly, at a distance from the enemy during the period of daily marches ;

Thirdly, within reach of, or in close proximity to the enemy ;

Fourthly, when stationary—i.e., during a halt of more or less duration ;

Fifthly, in close contact with the enemy after a fight ;

Sixthly, as an isolated detachment.

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It is plain that on most of these occasions cavalry has to act in conjunction and co-operation with the other arms. It will be well, therefore, to state that it is proposed to confine this chapter as far as possible to the consideration of the duties which will generally in the above-named situations devolve upon the cavalry arm.

What then are the duties which devolve upon the cavalry in the first of the situations which have just been enumerated?

A line of outposts along the frontier at the beginning of a campaign.

As a general rule at the commencement of a campaign, when perhaps the concentration of the army is not yet completed, the frontier is only at first watched by some isolated regiments of cavalry; these are in general subsequently succeeded by larger forces—i.e., brigades or divisions of that arm.

These bodies will find their support sometimes in strong frontier fortresses, sometimes in mixed bodies of troops composed of infantry and artillery. These latter troops, which are probably sent from the nearest garrisons to the frontier, occupy strongly the bridges and fords over rivers on the frontier, or the routes and passes over the chain of mountains, or the important points of the roads which traverse more or less at right angles the line of country which covers the front of the army. They will in fact hold all the important points of the frontier, so as to preserve against the incursions of the enemy the railway stations and bifurcations of railway which traverse the frontier, and of which it is necessary in any case to remain in possession.

There is generally, at any rate in Continental warfare, a preliminary period of concentration which precedes active operations, or the actual declaration of war.

In order to avoid any premature violation of the frontier the most advanced bodies of troops are generally placed at a distance of at least four or five miles within the actual frontier line, and this gives the advanced posts a certain

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scope and play. This preliminary period can generally be usefully employed by the cavalry (as well indeed by the other arms) in arranging and maturing all details connected with its duties, so that it should be able and ready at once to advance and carry out all the various tasks which will naturally fall to its lot.

During this preliminary period parties of cavalry are often (on the Continent) sent out to assist the civil employés of the Government, such as custom house officers, &c., in guarding and patrolling the frontier.

When there is a long line of frontier to be watched it will generally be divided into sections. If there is no field telegraph at once available, or at any rate till it is established, the cavalry will generally furnish relays of orderlies to keep up communications between these sections. If the campaign is on a smaller scale, similar relays will keep up communications between the various bodies who are guarding the extent of country which has to be watched, or which forms the front of the army. When the line of country is a long one, this service will often make large demands upon the cavalry arm. Small parties of cavalry are attached to the mixed bodies of troops who occupy the railway stations and other important points.

These parties will be employed in patrolling and guarding the telegraph lines up to the frontier (to prevent their being tampered with) and in other general duties.

From the moment that hostilities have begun, either after a declaration of war, or after a suspension of arms, or an armistice, the cavalry prevents as far as possible all intercourse of one side of the frontier or line of demarcation with the other. It veils as much as possible the movements and preparations of its own side from the knowledge and observation of the enemy's cavalry patrols.

Patrols should at this time display the greatest activity, and make the greatest efforts to take some prisoners. Their capture is specially important during this first period of hostilities, inasmuch as they afford information regarding the advanced troops of the enemy. No pains, therefore, should

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be spared to effect this object, which can often be best carried on by means of special patrols and ambuscades organised for this purpose.

During this period of preparation it is, as remarked by Von Widdern, very important to inspire on the one hand one's own cavalry with confidence, and to develop in it a spirit of enterprise, and on the other to make it respected by the enemy.

Hence every body of the enemy's troops who ventures across the frontier should be driven off and pursued, if possible, into its own territory.

Though it is necessary for the cavalry to be ready to advance as soon as war has been declared, it does not always follow that it is advisable, even when offensive operations are contemplated, for it thus to advance at once. It may be that such action would precipitate too much the general course of events. But in any case the cavalry now sends out small, well-mounted parties, led by officers who speak the language of the country, in order to gain intelligence of the enemy, to ascertain his position, his probable intentions, strength, and movements.

These patrols may or may not, according to circumstances, as has just been explained, be succeeded by large bodies such as brigades or divisions.

The conditions which will most conduce to the success of any enterprise undertaken by these patrols (which sometimes last for several days) are bold and enterprising leaders, a knowledge of the language spoken in the territory occupied by the enemy, horses in good hard condition, good maps, and a suitable supply of compressed forage carried in the nose-bags. Moreover, as these enterprises demand the greatest secrecy, it is advisable that both officers and men should wear the kit which is least likely to attract attention or to be seen from a distance. It has even been recommended by some Continental writers that they should be provided with cloaks and capes of the same colour as those of the enemy![1]

[1] The expediency of resorting to this device may be deemed somewhat doubtful.

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Outposts at a distance from the enemy during the period of daily marches.

In the majority of chapters and treatises upon outposts the distinction is not generally made sufficiently clear between the system to be adopted when a force is on the march from day to day, and that which should be followed when it remains stationary for a period of more or less duration in presence of the enemy.

When a force is on the march from day to day, to place a continuous line or cordon of outpost sentries and vedettes to encircle the whole extent of the front and flanks is in the great majority of cases not necessary, and only harasses and fatigues the troops to no purpose.

Such a system is specially erroneous and useless when still at a distance from the enemy and when as yet there has been no contact with him. Under such circumstances the main body, which, at the end of each day's march, is installed in quarters, camp, or bivouac, may generally be content with posting such marching outposts (*avant-postes de marches*) as will suffice to secure its safety till the next day.

In order to effect this object, all important points, such as cross roads or bifurcations of roads, defiles, fords, bridges, &c. &c., at some little distance in front and on the flanks of the position which has been taken up for the night, should be occupied at once. In operations which are carried out on a large scale the cavalry divisions which reconnoitre the country far in advance of the main body furnish these outposts. The task of the infantry is then confined to guarding and holding any bridges, passages, or defiles through which the cavalry has passed or left in its rear.

Again, when the operations are on a smaller scale, it is usual for the cavalry to take the main share of these outpost duties. The commander of the cavalry should of course be informed by the head-quarter staff of the extent of ground on the front and flanks which has to be covered and watched. In cases where it is not thought advisable, even though contact had not yet been established with the enemy, to

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leave the occupation of these marching outposts to the cavalry only, they may be held with detachments of mixed arms.

As the enemy cannot advance in any force except by the roads, the duties of these outposts consist in simply holding the important points which have just been named, and in sending cavalry patrols to explore the country beyond. If there are many of these posts to be guarded, and the demands upon the services of the cavalry are consequently great, it may be advisable that those points which are near to the camp, bivouac, or cantonment, should be held by infantry.

These different bodies of cavalry place in front of each of the points where they take up their position a picquet of greater or less strength, which will generally be sufficiently protected by a few vedette posts, provided that patrols are constantly sent out to a sufficient distance, both to the front and flanks, on the roads leading in the supposed direction of the enemy.

Of course if they find him they should not fail to keep touch of him. It will not, as already remarked, in the majority of cases, be necessary to establish a continuous line or chain of vedettes across the whole extent of country between the roads and points which are thus held and observed. It will suffice to organise a service of patrols to keep up lateral communication between these roads in order to communicate any news which may have been received.

When the flanks are 'in the air'—that is, when they rest or are protected by no natural or artificial place or position which can be utilised for defence, a mixed detachment well supplied with cavalry should be sent to take up its position at some cross roads or other suitable point of vantage on the flank. The cavalry which is with this detachment can then send out patrols on the flanks to at least the distance of a day's march.

When there are any special points upon which it is deemed important to obtain early and accurate information, it is best to make use of officers' patrols, which can go to a great distance.

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Thirdly, cavalry outposts within reach of, or in close proximity to the enemy.

During the period of active operations, when at the end of a day's march, one remains either in contact with or within reach of the enemy, perhaps only the distance of a day's march, or even less, separates the opposing forces. It need hardly be said that under such circumstances all troops on the front line must be ready promptly to take to their arms. But even in such a situation as this, where the utmost vigilance is required, to surround oneself with a continuous cordon of sentries and vedettes will nearly always be a pure waste of force. When a halt is perhaps made late in the day, and it is intended to continue the march the next morning, these little posts would have to be placed—it may be in twilight or in darkness—on ground which is not known and which is broken up by hedges, ditches, bushes, &c. &c. The enemy for his part has not had the time or opportunity to examine the ground and to find out how our troops are posted, and he cannot profit by any mistakes which have been made, because in order to do so he would have to run a great risk, and encounter the manifold difficulties of advancing at haphazard across country, avoiding the roads and other avenues of approach, which are of course strongly guarded.

The proper system to be here adopted is that which is dictated by common sense, and which experience has shown to be sufficient, viz. :—

To occupy with detachments of more or less strength, according to their importance, the roads, fords, bridges, &c., by which the enemy could advance, to keep up communication between these posts by means of patrols, and further, to ensure the safety of the force by constant cavalry patrols to the front and flanks. It matters but little whether the positions of these outposts fail to satisfy all, or even most of the requirements which theory demands. In practice they will seldom be found to do so. If only they can be held, if they prevent a surprise or sudden advance of the enemy they will have served their purpose.

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When in close proximity to the enemy these outposts will always be furnished by the infantry or by detachments of mixed arms. When, however, the enemy is at some few miles distance from one's own outposts, the latter are generally furnished by the cavalry, because at that distance contact with the enemy cannot well be maintained by infantry patrols, and a well-organised service of patrols is the best guarantee of safety. In this case, however, it is often nevertheless advisable to place in rear of the cavalry outposts detachments of infantry at important or convenient points, upon which the cavalry can fall back in case of need.

When the proximity of the enemy is closer, and especially when the ground is broken and undulating, the cavalry only furnishes outposts during the day; during the night this service is better performed by the infantry.

The close proximity of the enemy, as has just been observed, always necessitates the employment of infantry outposts. During the night, however, when it is possible for the enemy to profit by the darkness in order to threaten the flanks or to make a turning movement, it is often convenient to entrust the cavalry with the protection of these points, and to detail and post special picquets of that arm in order to guard the flanks (*gardes de flanc—flanken feld-wachen*). If infantry is employed for this purpose, it is always advisable to attach to it some cavalry patrols.

It is generally necessary to attach to each infantry outpost 2 or 3 cavalry orderlies, in order that the transmission of orders may be carried out without any delay.

When the country in front of the outposts is much broken or difficult to traverse, as for instance when some of it is wooded or much cut up by ravines or enclosures, it is often a good plan to post mixed picquets composed (say) of 30 infantry and 10 cavalry. The latter will then furnish patrols for exploring the roads to a distance, while the infantry furnishes the ordinary duties of the picquet, and also sends out scouting patrols, which thoroughly search through and reconnoitre the ground which is inaccessible to cavalry.

In order to save the horses from unnecessary fatigue,

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Cossack posts instead of double vedettes may often be used in outpost duty. Cossack posts are composed of 2 or 3 or even a larger number of horsemen, of whom one remains mounted as a vedette, while the others, having dismounted, remain some little distance in rear, and assist their mounted comrade in keeping watch. The advantage of these Cossack posts is that they save in some degree the horses from fatigue.

Fourthly, outposts when stationary—i.e., during a halt of more or less duration.

It has just been shown that when a force which is on the march arrives at its halting place, be it at quarters, camp, or bivouac for the day, it is generally sufficient to have the roads, bridges, defiles, &c., and the other avenues of approach guarded by advanced posts, between which communication should be kept up by a well-organised system of patrols.

When, however, a halt of some duration is made in presence of, or in close proximity to the enemy, the conditions are no longer the same, inasmuch as under such circumstances the enemy has leisure and opportunity to acquire a fairly accurate knowledge of one's position and strength. It will be necessary, therefore, to adopt a far more stringent system, and to protect oneself with a cordon of regularly constituted outposts and a continuous chain of sentries and vedettes. If the distance from the enemy is great enough to allow the outposts a certain scope and play, the cavalry will generally furnish the majority of these outposts during the day, and the infantry by night. If, however, the enemy is in immediate proximity, outposts composed of infantry are nearly always necessary.

In order to ensure the safety of the flanks, mixed detachments of both arms will be stationed at convenient spots on either flank both during the day and night. Upon the cavalry of these outposts will devolve the task of pushing forward scouting patrols and making reconnaissances, even

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during the night, as far as necessary in the directions which are deemed to be dangerous.

If the enemy is at a distance of more than a couple of miles or so from the outposts, some cavalry soldiers should be left at night attached to the infantry which furnishes the post, not only for transmission of orders and of forwarding any intelligence which may be received, but also for the purpose of sending scouting patrols along the roads in the direction of the enemy, because beyond the distance of a mile or two infantry patrols might find it difficult to maintain touch of the enemy.

The system of advanced posts to be adopted during a prolonged halt in presence of, or in close proximity to the enemy is, it need hardly be said, the normal one which has generally been accepted as the best and most convenient to adopt, and which comprises the usual four lines, viz.:

Firstly, a continuous chain of vedettes by day and of infantry sentries by night.

Secondly, cavalry picquets by day, infantry picquets by night. Mixed detachments of infantry and cavalry on the flanks both by day and night.

Thirdly, supports of the picquets.

Fourthly, reserves or main body of the outposts.

The extent of front or ground which can be watched by a cavalry outpost must of course depend upon the nature and conformation of the country. When the country is open or flat, a cavalry picquet can watch and patrol a considerable extent of ground; when, on the other hand, it is wooded, hilly, or enclosed, it often happens that only a small extent of country can be covered by one outpost.

The duties which devolve upon the four lines, which, as just shown, constitute an outpost, are not the same for all. The task of the vedettes and the picquets is to observe and to explore. That of the supports and reserves is different: it consists in delaying the advance of the enemy in case he endeavours to advance and make an attack.

It is essential to bear in mind this distinction. The cavalry vedettes are placed at points which command a good

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view in front of them, and which are at the same time if possible concealed from view. In fact, 'to see and not be seen' should be the motto of a cavalry vedette. There is no sort of necessity that they should be aligned upon each other. They can be concealed from view behind either a tree, a bush, or hedge, &c. &c., always provided they have a good view in front of them, that they can see the vedettes to right and left of them, and can be seen from the picquet, or by a sentry placed by the picquet to keep them in sight.

The vedettes should not in general be more than from 800 or 1,000 yards at the most from the picquet.

At night the position of the vedettes is changed.

There is no object in men holding during the night positions which command in daylight a good view of the ground in front of them, and which, when it is dark, are probably far too distant from their picquets. They are usually, therefore, drawn in much closer at night, and placed where they can best watch the main avenues of approach, such as the roads, bridges, lanes, defiles, &c., or at the bottom of slopes, so as they may be able better to see any object against the sky line above. Those, however, posted at the edge of a wood—i.e., in front of it, should be pushed forward a bit in order that the rustling and soughing of the branches in the wind may not interfere with their hearing.

The vedettes (who are generally posted double, both by day and by night) allow no strangers or countrymen to pass the chain, except by the route which is guarded by what is called the examining post which is placed for the purpose of preventing the enemy's spies from penetrating within the lines.

The picquets are intended to furnish—

1. The vedettes and their reliefs.
2. The patrols.
3. Any detached posts which may be necessary.

A picquet should be placed as nearly as circumstances will permit in the centre of the section of the front or portion

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of ground which had been assigned to it to guard, and either on or as close as possible to the principal road to be watched.

Cavalry picquets should have an open country in front of them. At night the men should, if deemed necessary, barricade the roads or other avenues of approach by which they might suddenly be attacked.

It may here be remarked (and the remark applies to both cavalry and infantry outposts) that any change on the disposition of outposts which is made just before nightfall tends to increase the security of the main body from attack, more especially if in consequence of this change the outpost is placed nearer the enemy. If the latter has planned a surprise or a *coup de main* based on the knowledge which he has been able to acquire of our advanced posts during the day, he is likely to desist and halt when he finds himself suddenly opposed by outposts of which he knows nothing, and at points which he had good reason to think were unoccupied.

Besides the ordinary vedettes, the picquets have to furnish the patrols, whose task it is to explore and reconnoitre to a certain distance—e.g., for three to five miles or so, or, if the enemy's outposts are near, till they gain contact with him. It is generally recognised that the closest line of sentries and vedettes will not suffice to secure the safety of the main body. If the enemy makes a sudden attack *en masse*, he will brush the thin line of sentries away. The only way to guard against such attempts is to have notice in good time, from the moment the enemy begins to advance in force beyond his own advanced posts, and while he is yet at a distance, so that one's own troops may have time to take their arms and to make their dispositions for defence.

It is evident, moreover, that a fixed or stationary system of outposts must be useless for the purpose of discovering what is going on, or what the enemy is doing just beyond the range of vision of the vedettes ; moreover, at night or in a fog movements can be carried out by an enemy very near to them (i.e., to sentries or vedettes) without their being able to detect anything unusual. It is clear, therefore, that the foundation of all security must rest upon a well-organised

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system of patrols pushed forward to a greater or less distance, as circumstances may seem to demand.

At night these patrols should follow the roads and lanes. In the daytime it is better for them not to follow too strictly the roads, but rather to search out places which may harbour and conceal bodies of the enemy, such as woods, ravines, villages, &c. &c.

A patrol, before re-entering its own lines, should send forward a man to give notice to the picquet of its return. By night, moreover, it should return by the route by which it went out, in order to prevent false alarms.

When in close proximity to the enemy, as soon as one patrol is on the point of re-entering the lines, another should be detached from the picquet, because all dangerous ground ought to be constantly traversed and examined.

The rounds—i.e., a non-commissioned officer with or without one man or so—should visit from time to time the vedettes, in order to collect any information which they may have to give, and also to see that they are on the alert. These rounds should be made at the hours intermediate between those when the relief of the vedettes takes place.

The commander of every picquet is bound to verify personally, as far as possible, every item of information sent in by the vedettes or brought back by his patrols before he transmits it to his chief, the commander of the outposts. As soon as he has chosen a suitable position for the picquet and posted his vedettes, he will send in to that officer a sketch of his post, showing what roads he is watching and what extent of country his vedettes cover. From time to time he will send in reports, even when there is nothing new to report. It is often found convenient that the cavalry should relieve the infantry each morning, so as to carry out the outpost duties during the day. When this is the case, the cavalry patrols should patrol and reconnoitre the roads leading towards the enemy from the earliest dawn, because that is the most favourable time for a surprise. It is therefore important that they should go scouting at this moment in order to learn in good time of any attempts which may

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be contemplated by the enemy against the line of sentries. The infantry, after being relieved, should wait till daybreak before it marches off, and until it has been thoroughly ascertained by the cavalry patrols that the advanced troops of the enemy are making no forward movement for that morning.

Similarly, moreover (as in the last supposed case [1]), when the country in front of the outposts is broken up and difficult to traverse—as, for instance, when some of it is wooded or cut up with ravines or enclosures—it is often advisable to post mixed picquets, composed, say, of 30 infantry and 10 cavalry.

The cavalry will then furnish patrols for exploring the roads and country generally to a distance, while the infantry furnishes the men for the ordinary duties of the picquet and also patrols for searching and reconnoitring any ground inaccessible to the cavalry.

The normal picquets, in addition to supplying the reliefs for the vedettes and men for the patrols, have also sometimes to furnish detached posts under a non-commissioned officer. These detached posts are used for observation at points which, owing to the conformation of the ground, or other circumstances, it is not possible for the vedettes of the picquet to overlook, such as a defile in front of the chain of vedettes. They are also sometimes used to keep up (when necessary) constant communication between two neighbouring posts which are not in sight of each other, or whose communication with each other would otherwise be imperfect.

These detached posts may be used also for guarding a post of observation which is placed on any commanding elevation, such as a church tower, from which a good view to a great distance may be obtained, 'Such places are often of great value. A couple of intelligent non-commissioned officers may be used as observers, and they should be furnished with a telescope.'

The elevation which is thus made use of may be either within or without the line of vedettes. If a really good one,

[1] I.e. cavalry outposts within reach of, or in close proximity to the enemy.

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it may be possible to do away with a post or two; but in this case, and always when beyond the chain of vedettes, a party must be stationed close at hand to support the post.[1]

Finally, a non-commissioned officer's post is placed upon the main road which has to be guarded. This post should, whenever practicable, be established at some point or passage by which everyone must pass, such as a bridge, &c. &c. Everyone who wishes to cross the change of vedettes should be sent back to go by this point, and should undergo examination at this post, which is called the examining post, which has for its object to prevent the enemy's spies from penetrating the lines.

It is essential to have at this point an officer, or a non-commissioned officer, as a trustworthy interpreter, who speaks the language of the country or that of the enemy. When the outposts are furnished by cavalry the general task of the picquet is the same as that of the supports of infantry —viz. to prevent the enemy, in case of his making an attack, from arriving too quickly at the camp, bivouac, or cantonment. Hence the support should be posted if possible at points where it will be able most efficiently to retard the advance of the enemy.

These supports will often find it advisable to barricade or otherwise put into a state of defence some rallying point which will serve to retard and delay the enemy's advance as much as possible. The services of the pioneers will be found very useful for this work. The whole of the support should be mounted at daybreak.

The general nature of the duties of the support are the same in all systems of outposts, and therefore in a chapter which aims chiefly at sketching out the *systems* to be adopted under different conditions need not be further discussed. The same remark applies to the reserve or main body of the outposts. These outposts, when the force is a mixed one, and in close proximity to the enemy, are rarely furnished by the cavalry, and only a small proportion of that arm is

[1] *Cavalry Tactics*, pp. 171-2. Kegan, Paul, Trench & Co.

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generally attached to it. It may here be remarked, however, that officers' patrols, which are sent, it may be, far out upon the flanks, or with some other special object in view to a considerable distance, are often furnished from the reserve of the outposts. These patrols will, of course, go to a far greater distance than the ordinary patrols of the picquets could possibly do. The task of these latter is merely to patrol the country (in direction of the enemy) which is in the vicinity of the picquet—i.e., within two or three miles or so.

If these officers' patrols advance a distance of eight or ten miles or so without finding any sign of the enemy, it may safely be presumed that no attack in force will be made on that day, on account of the time necessary for the enemy to traverse that distance, and afterwards to deploy his troops.

Fifthly, outposts in close contact with the enemy after a fight.

Immediately after a combat, and if only the darkness of night has put an end to the fighting, there is generally neither time nor opportunity to draw from the main body of the troops who have been engaged the detachments who were originally told off for the service of outposts. Hence, in such cases as these, it is the troops who happen to be in the front line who of necessity have to furnish them. This they do by covering themselves by companies and battalions, who, in their turn, push forward some small detachments in advance, and thus improvise as best they can a line of outposts.

Under such circumstances it is hardly practicable, as a general rule, for the cavalry to do much in the way of reconnoitring towards the front during the night. It ought, however, to be extremely active on the flanks, in order to discover in good time whether the enemy is taking advantage of the darkness of the night to attempt a flanking or a turning movement.

At daybreak, moreover, the next morning, the cavalry should at once be on the move, and send out scouting parties to reconnoitre the front and to see whether the enemy has

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changed his position, or whether during the darkness of the night he has withdrawn his forces.

Sixthly, outposts of an isolated detachment.

It is not sufficient for a small isolated detachment to guard against a surprise; it has also to take precautions against being surrounded and captured. Cavalry patrols and reconnoitring parties may often find themselves on active service in such a position as this.

Such a detachment will best find its security in changing at nightfall the position it has occupied during the day, and in thus falsifying any observations which may have been made during the day by the inhabitants. It should take up its position in woods or other such sheltered places. It should, moreover, never pass the night in a spot the position and approaches of which the inhabitants have been able to reconnoitre at sunset.

If such a post has to be maintained by an isolated detachment at any fixed spot, the commander of it, after having surveyed the ground and the direction of the roads, will do well to put himself in the enemy's place, and picture to himself the circle which the latter would have to make outside his outposts in order to surround him. Outside this circle he will push out patrols both by day and by night, especially on his flanks and rear, in order to guard against being taken by surprise.

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CHAPTER XIV.

DISMOUNTED SERVICE.

Necessity of cavalry men being trained to fight on foot proved by recent campaigns—Too much tendency to ignore this truth—Examples first shown in American Civil War—Extraordinary services rendered by American horsemen—Failure of European armies to profit by these experiences—Action of German cavalry constantly crippled during Franco-German war by want of an efficient firearm—Measures taken after the war to remedy this defect—Reasons why importance of dismounted service has recently been so universally recognised—What dismounted cavalry should be able to do—Conditions under which dismounted service should be resorted to—Offensive action of dismounted men—Supposed offensive attack—Horseholders not to be unnecessarily exposed to fire in bringing up led horses—Expediency of attempting a simultaneous attack by mounted men in rear of enemy's position—Examples of what American horsemen were able to achieve—Examples from Franco-German and other campaigns—Proportion of horseholders to dismounted men in various armies—Should horseholders be mounted or dismounted?—Various other points to be borne in mind—Instances where dismounted men may be used to advantage—Results achieved in this way in American Civil War—Concluding remarks.

THE experiences of recent European campaigns have irrefutably proved that if cavalry is to be prepared to fulfil all the tasks which, without demanding too much from it, will certainly in future campaigns fall to its lot, the cavalry soldier must be able at any time to fight on foot, and to do it fairly well. It is not too much to say that this is a truth which among the majority of cavalry officers has only recently begun to meet with the full and frank recognition which it deserves. British as well as Continental cavalry officers of the old school resented as long

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as they could the notion of thus turning the cavalry soldier into what they termed a hybrid creature, as being opposed to the prejudices, traditions, and ideas of the cavalry arm. Hence, though the necessity of imparting to him instruction in the art of fighting on foot was long ago *theoretically* recognised, the practical importance of the subject, both in our own and Continental armies, was, up to the time of the Franco-German campaign, resolutely ignored. No stronger proof of the truth of this assertion need be adduced than the fact that the instructive and valuable experiences of the American Civil War were never taken to heart or utilised by the great armies of Europe. For what were the facts and the lessons which might have been learnt from the exploits and successes of the American cavalry on both sides? The shrewd, practical common sense of the American people, and the utter absence of tradition, prejudice, and red tape, led them to adopt a system of tactics somewhat new and peculiar to themselves, and not at all in accordance with European notions, practices, and ideas, but one nevertheless wonderfully adapted to their circumstances and to the conditions of war in which they were engaged. At the beginning of the American Civil War both sides were totally unprepared for hostilities, and armies had to be organised, drilled, and equipped before operations could be begun. With regard to the cavalry, both sides were at first inclined to act upon the ideas, then very prevalent, of the uselessness of mounted men against modern infantry fire-arms; but they soon discovered their mistake, and the mounted service increased rapidly; so much so, that at the latter end of the war the Northern States maintained no less than 80,000 cavalry, almost all of whom were equipped with rifles or carbines.

The brilliant and, in some cases, extraordinary services that large bodies of both the Federal and the Southern cavalry, fighting for the most part equally well on foot as on horseback, rendered to their respective sides have long been matters of history, and certainly serve to show that the contending parties originated and developed a system of working cavalry which was capable, under some conditions, of

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producing the greatest results. Who that has read the accounts of what mounted troops—call them cavalry or call them mounted rifles, as you will—achieved in America can deny their great usefulness and efficiency? Though these successes of the American horsemen were patent to all the world, the cavalry of Europe steadfastly shut its eyes to obvious facts, and failed to profit by the cheapest experience of all—viz., that obtained at the expense of the others. It was only after the Franco-German campaign, in which both the French and German cavalry (each drilled, equipped, and manœuvred in the old-fashioned style) failed to effect anything on any field of battle at all proportionate to the cavalry forces employed, or to the sacrifices incurred, that the experiences of the American war were taken to heart and began to bear some practical fruit. Even on scouting and on reconnaissance duties, as soon as the 'Franctireurs' were organised, the training, equipment, and armament of the much-vaunted Prussian Uhlans rendered them quite unable to cope with foes who, though brave, must, from want of training and organisation, have been contemptible in themselves. In order to deal with them, the Prussian cavalry had to arm themselves, as is well known, with Chassepot rifles taken from the enemy, or to be accompanied by infantry to clear the villages of these volunteer riflemen. In America the Home Guards, which on the Federal side represented the same type of force as the 'Franctireurs' in France, never checked the onward and rapid progress of the Southern horse. As to being accompanied by infantry, the latter would have laughed to scorn the idea of being thus hampered or delayed in a raid or partisan operation.

After the termination of the Franco-German war of 1870-71 there was no longer any hesitation or delay on the part of the governing authorities of the German army. They (as also their neighbours) learned a lesson from the experiences of the latter part of the above campaign, when the Franctireurs compelled the German cavalry to march under the protection or with the support of infantry. They frankly acknowledged that their cavalry had been wofully deficient

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in the knowledge of how to fight on foot. Thus General von Schmidt, in his 'Instructions for Cavalry,' when speaking of dismounted service, remarks as follows :—

'We cannot conceal from ourselves that in the last campaign we appeared in the field totally unprepared in this respect, and the partial successes which we gained were due merely to the want of cohesion in the newly-formed troops of the enemy and to the acknowledged bravery of our regiments, but not to the instruction which they had received.'

After the war, however, the logic of inexorable facts was too strong to allow of the old-fashioned methods of armament for cavalry any longer to prevail, to the exclusion of those which the arm in future campaigns would be quite as often called upon to use. The German cavalry was armed with a carbine of increased power and range, and great attention is now paid by it to training and instructing the men to fight on foot.

The signs that this example of Germany was being followed by all the other great military Powers were soon apparent. They were to be seen in the more copious instruction which, in all the recently revised cavalry Regulations of foreign armies, as well as in our own, began to be given on the practice of dismounted duties, and in the fact that in all the great armies of Europe, as well as in the German army, the cavalry was supplied with a fire-arm of greater range and power than heretofore. One of the consequences of all this was that at the opening of the Russo-Turkish campaign of 1878 the Russian cavalry which took the field comprised many corps of dragoons which were especially equipped and trained to fight on foot when occasion required.

It may naturally be asked, especially by young cavalry officers, what are the causes and events which have during recent campaigns so developed the necessity for aptitude in dismounted service, and caused its importance to be so generally recognised? The answer to this question may be given in a few sentences.

It is merely repeating a truism to say that the events and experiences of recent campaigns have conclusively shown

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that, owing to the increased range and precision of modern weapons, the usefulness of the cavalry arm in the actual battle field has been much curtailed. This diminution of its usefulness is, however, by common consent, amply compensated by the strategical advantages secured by the wide range of duties and the increased sphere of independent action which (as the Germans began to find out in 1870) cavalry can be trained to carry out. This increased independence, however, of cavalry, if it is to be a reality instead of a mere figure of speech, will frequently place both large and small bodies of cavalry in situations where they have to act for, and rely upon, themselves alone ; where they will have for a time to oppose mixed bodies of troops, and where, as a necessary consequence, their success must greatly depend upon their skill in the use of the carbine, and on their aptitude and training for dismounted service. Hence it comes to pass that fresh duties are imposed upon the cavalry, and it is only by their efficient performance that it will be able to maintain its prestige, and to render good service to the army to which it belongs. It must be borne in mind, moreover, that the range, rapidity of fire, and the execution of the modern carbine, are factors which have opened out these opportunities of increased activity and usefulness to the cavalry, and have given it good chances of attaining results by dismounted action in future warfare such as it could never, with its old-fashioned fire-arms, have hoped to achieve.

And why is this? The answer is plain. Because the arming of cavalry with the modern weapon has revolutionised the system upon which dragoons, properly so called, used to fight. The time required by the dismounted horseman, in case of defeat, to regain his horse has not been increased, while the time he will have to accomplish it in has, owing to the increased range of his weapon, almost quadrupled. Dismounted cavalry can now, in all cases where there is any cover available, place their horses in the rear, and, taking up a defensive position, can (provided the men have been taught to shoot fairly well) begin to annoy at 800 or 900 yards, to inflict loss at 500 or 600 yards, and after that to pour in

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volleys with precision, so that an action might in many cases be settled before the approaching enemy could come within 200 yards. There would then be nothing to prevent dismounted cavalry, provided their horses were under cover—say, for instance, in a wood or in rear of a village—maintaining the fight until the enemy were within 150 or 200 yards. They could then run to their horses and mount, and gallop away in case of being over-matched.

The necessity, moreover, for *offensive* action, which will in future sometimes devolve upon the cavalry, must not be lost sight of.

When, owing to the conformation of the ground, or to the enemy's occupation of sheltered positions, such as small villages, buildings, coppices, defiles, or bridges, &c., which cannot be turned, when nothing can be effected or hoped for by mounted action, and there is no infantry at hand, there is no other course open to the cavalry than to dismount, and to clear the way by an attack with carbines on foot, so as to gain its object and be able to continue its advance. It was in this way that in the Franco-German campaign, and also in the Russo-Turkish campaign, cavalry had to fight. In future campaigns similar combats will necessarily occur, and probably with more frequency than in the two last European wars, in both of which, as has already been seen, the cavalry of one side was greatly superior to that of the other. In any future contest between any two European armies this great disparity may not exist, and each side will probably launch forth its cavalry some distance in advance of its main army, and collisions between these opposing bodies of horse will probably be among the first incidents of the campaign. Each side will naturally endeavour to stop the advance of the other wherever woods, passages, defiles, and other suitable spots present a good opportunity for dismounted action. In pursuits and retreats, moreover, there is, and has always been, plenty of scope for dismounted action upon the part of the cavalry.

What, then, ought cavalry when acting dismounted to be able to do?

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Firstly, it ought certainly to be able to hold its own, and when fairly matched to be able to overcome the opposition of the enemy's dismounted cavalry.

Secondly, it should be able to overcome the opposition of weak infantry detachments, so that a small body of the latter arm should not be able, as has often happened in recent campaigns, to hold far superior bodies in check, and to say to them in effect, 'Thus far shalt thou come and no farther.'

Thirdly, cavalry should be able to occupy rapidly with dismounted men any important and distant point, and to hold them against the enemy till the infantry of its own side can arrive.

Fourthly, cavalry should be able to provide for the security of its cantonments and to defend them from attack.

It is obvious that when cavalry is by instruction and practice ready and able to render these services, its usefulness is greatly extended and a wide field is open for its action. The consciousness, moreover, of being able to act thus independently will greatly tend to develop the desire to take the initiative, and will foster the love of enterprise and longing for personal distinction which should animate all cavalry soldiers.

In acting thus care must be taken that the cavalry does not become mere mounted infantry, which is the last thing to be desired. All that is demanded from it is limited to its being able, when occasion may require it, to render such services as those which have just been detailed. It is no part of its duty to undertake or be drawn into long-sustained combats, or attempt when dismounted to cope for any length of time with the enemy's infantry. But it may certainly be laid down as an axiom that cavalry which cannot fight on foot under certain conditions is not up to the requirements of modern warfare, nor is it worth the sacrifice which it costs the State. No independent or successful action of large bodies of cavalry over an extensive and varied scene of operations is conceivable unless such cavalry is capable of maintaining a combat with fire-arms, either for the attack of points which it is desirable to secure, or for the defence of

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cantonments, bridges, defiles, &c., which it is necessary to hold.

Before discussing the instruction which should be given to cavalry, so as best to qualify it for dismounted service, it is essential to keep clearly in view the condition under which this method of employing cavalry would generally be required.

As already stated, cavalry has only to deal with the attack or defence of certain positions. This attack or defence ordinarily resolves itself into a combat with carbines on more or less broken ground.

Hence, as dismounted cavalry cannot be advantageously employed in long-sustained combats, whatever is done should be done quickly. Decisive action, and that with a definite object in view, must always be taken at once, and as many carbines as possible should be brought into play from the commencement of the fight. If these propositions be granted as correct, it will now be as well to proceed a step further and to consider what is the actual practice and instruction which should be imparted to cavalry soldiers, so as best to enable them to acquit themselves well in a dismounted combat and to bring it to a successful issue. In order the better to discuss these points it will, perhaps, be advisable to divide this part of the subject under 2 heads, and to discuss separately the offensive and defensive action of dismounted cavalry.

In considering how an offensive attack should be carried out by dismounted men, it should at the outset be remarked that hitherto it has been rather the fashion both among military writers and also among cavalry officers to regard this mode of employing cavalry as wholly exceptional. In other words, it has always been inculcated, and rightly so, in cavalry Regulations and other works that it should only be resorted to when it is absolutely necessary to obtain some immediate result, and when no other means of attaining that result are available. But, on the other hand, the experience of recent campaigns may be said to have conclusively shown that such occasions do often occur in actual warfare, and with the increased sphere of action which now devolves upon

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the cavalry arm, may be expected to occur with greater frequency in the future than in the past.

Hence it is plain that any cavalry which aims at being ready and able to carry out any task which may fall to its lot must be prepared to act should occasion require on the offensive. This being so, the offensive action of cavalry when dismounted can no longer be regarded as being so very exceptional, but must be looked upon as a contingency which is liable at any moment to occur. It is time that this fact should be more frankly owned and acknowledged than has hitherto been the custom to do, as this would lead to a more extended practice and consequently greater skill in dismounted duties than the majority of cavalry regiments both at home and abroad have as yet acquired.

It is easy to suppose a variety of cases such as have happened and will continually happen in actual warfare, where the usefulness of cavalry being able to fight on foot would be manifest enough.

For instance, a comparatively insignificant body of infantry may bar the way of a strong body of cavalry. Again, it might be important to find out what the enemy is doing beyond some special point, such as a bridge, defile, &c. &c., or to secure the possession of these points. In any such cases as these the commander of a cavalry force might find it imperative to make an attack with dismounted men, always provided, of course, that circumstances appeared to favour the chance of success.

The object, therefore, of the following suggestions is to illustrate a simple method of fighting on foot, which might, with greater or less modifications, be advantageously employed when it is necessary to make an offensive attack. It is hardly needful, moreover, to point out that the cavalry which has been trained upon some definite system and plan must necessarily have a great advantage over troops who have not had the advantage of such training.

For the purpose of illustration it will be well to take some supposed case, and to consider somewhat in detail the principal difficulties which might present themselves, and

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the course of action which would be likely to give the best chances of success. For instance, when a body of cavalry, say of 2 or 3 squadrons, has to make an offensive attack, in order to sweep away the opposition of any small force which may be barring its path, there are obviously 3 or 4 questions which will at once require to be solved. These will, of course vary as to circumstances, but some of the more general of them may be enumerated as follows :—

What proportion of the force available for attack should be placed in 1st line ?

Should there be a support, and how should it be used ?

What formation and tactics should be adopted for the attack ?

Is it necessary generally to have a reserve, and should it consist of mounted or dismounted men, &c. &c. ?

It is essentially necessary that every squadron commander or subaltern should have been habituated to make up his mind rapidly upon such points as these before he is called upon to act in real warfare, and should have accustomed his men to work under him upon some definite system and plan.

It is hoped that the following hints and instructions may be found useful to those young cavalry officers whose ideas upon this subject may be somewhat loose and vague.

Let us take the case of an offensive attack, say by two squadrons, against the enemy's dismounted cavalry.

The men who are intended to make it and to act in 1st line should be told off in 2 or 3 squads or sections per squadron, according as the strength of the squadron may permit. Each squad should be commanded by a subaltern or sergeant, and should be perfectly under his control.

Every attack has necessarily 4 stages, viz. :—

(1) Reconnaissance of the position to be attacked.

(2) Preparation for the attack.

(3) The actual combat.

(4) Pursuit or retreat.

As cavalry has only to carry on a fight with carbines during a comparatively short time, and as it is necessary to produce the utmost effect as quickly as possible, the support

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should almost invariably be brought into action as soon as it is seen how and at what point it can best be made use of.

The reserve should, it need hardly be said, consist of a mounted troop or squadron, which is posted as much as possible out of the direct line of the enemy's fire. It should be held in readiness to follow up any success which may be gained by the dismounted men as soon as the ground is favourable. On the other hand, in case of failure it should endeavour to keep back the enemy and protect the led horses while its own dismounted party remount.

With regard to the disposal of the men's swords when acting dismounted, Von Schmidt, in his 'Instructions for Cavalry,' remarks as follows: 'As the sword is a great hindrance to the dismounted man in broken ground, it should be unbuckled and hung on the saddle by the part of the waistbelt between the two slings. It is thus not in the way, and will not be lost if the led horses are moved; moreover, the men can easily take their blades on mounting without buckling on their waistbelts.'[1]

In order to guard against a surprise, or a sudden flank attack, one or two mounted men should be sent out to some distance to each flank in order to reconnoitre and give timely notice of the approach of the advance of any hostile body against the flank of the dismounted men or against the led horses.

It is, of course, impossible to lay down with any precision or exactitude the manner in which a combat by dismounted men should be carried out, as it is evident that a commander in making his dispositions must be governed by circumstances which will perhaps vary in every case.

[1] It is to be regretted that some instructions to obviate the inconvenience of carrying the sword when acting dismounted are not laid down in our own cavalry Regulations. The more obvious plan would perhaps be to carry the sword always on the saddle, a course which has often been strongly advocated. Till some such plan as this is adopted the capabilities of our cavalry for dismounted service can never be properly developed. Some experiments have recently been made at Aldershot on this point.

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Let it, however, in this case be supposed that one of the two squadrons, each consisting of 36 files, has to make a dismounted attack upon a small body of the enemy who have taken advantage of some slight cover afforded by the conformation of the ground and are endeavouring to bar the further advance of the cavalry. An attack might be carried out somewhat as follows :—

The commander of the squadron, after having reconnoitred the position and strength of the enemy, having satisfied himself there is nothing to be effected by mounted action, and ascertained that the conformation of the ground affords cover enough to render possible either a front or flank attack by dismounted men, must quickly make up his mind as to the method of his attack and the number of men he can employ in it. The men are then dismounted under cover, whenever this is possible, and quickly told off into 3 squads of about equal strength. As in the case here supposed one squadron of 36 files is to be employed in dismounted duty, the number of carbines brought into action by each of the 3 squads would be 18.[1]

Two of these squads should be used for the attack, and the 3rd should be told off as a support.

These squads may, for the sake of convenience, be numbered 1, 2, and 3, respectively. Squads Nos. 1 and 2 should then commence the attack by advancing against the enemy in open or skirmishing order, with arms at the trail, under the direction of their respective leaders, taking advantage of any cover which might be available, and which the accidents of the ground may afford. As soon as these leaders see that their men have advanced a convenient distance, and are advantageously disposed for obtaining cover, they give the command to halt. Upon this every man should at once take advantage of such shelter as the accidents of the ground may afford and make ready to fire.

[1] This is, of course, supposing that 3 men out of 4 are dismounted. From the other squadron might be formed a mounted reserve and an escort for led horses, &c.

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The command 'At —— yards commence firing' should then be given. As soon as a few rounds have thus been fired the squadron commander should then direct one of the squads—say No. 2—to cease firing and to advance. Upon this No. 2 squad, led by its commander, makes a rush forward and takes up a position in advance of the line held by No. 1, taking advantage as before of any available cover or shelter which there may be, and which might be favourable for carrying on the attack. As soon as the commander of No. 1 squad sees that No. 2 squad has established itself in its new position and has again opened fire, he gives the word, 'Cease firing,' and then watches his opportunity to make a similar rush forward with his men, and takes up a position in advance of that held by No. 2 squad. By thus making alternate advances and working systematically up to the enemy, the dismounted men will often be able to approach near enough either to dislodge him by their fire or be enabled to make a final rush and take his position by storm. The distance passed over in these advances should not be so great as to put the men out of breath, and thereby impair the efficiency of their fire.

Meanwhile the squadron commander will have been able to see during the fight how his support may best be used, and to bring it into action accordingly.

The support may advantageously be used either to reinforce the fire of either of the other two squads, or, it may be, where opportunity offers, directed to gain a position which will enable it to bring a fire upon the enemy's flank. In any case, however, the support should never be allowed to remain long idle, as it can always be used to reinforce the fire of the other two squads.

If it is found necessary to make a rush upon the enemy's position in order to take it by storm, the most favourable moment for doing this will generally be when the dismounted men have worked up to within 80 or 100 yards or so of the enemy's position. Before doing this Nos. 1 and 2 squads should be reinforced by the support.

Should the assault be successful, and the enemy be

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driven from his position, the dismounted men should never attempt to pursue, for that is the duty of the mounted troop or squadron (which is acting as a reserve), provided that the ground be practicable for its employment. The men who have carried the position should merely occupy the further border of it, and fire upon the retreating enemy as long as the fire is effective.

In the case of a wood or village being attacked, as soon as the hither edge of it is carried, every effort should be made to occupy the further border as soon as possible. After the confusion which is inseparable from the successful assault of a position, the support should at once be rallied by its commander and hold itself in readiness for any eventuality which may occur.

If the attack is a failure, and it is deemed advisable, either on account of the enemy being more numerous than was anticipated, or from his being too strongly posted, to retire, the retreat should be carried out in the same manner as the attack—i.e. alternately by each squad. Each squad, as it retires to the rear and takes up a position from which to re-open fire, should endeavour to protect as much as possible by its fire the other group during its retirement.

As soon as the command 'Mount' is given, it is generally the custom in our service to bring up the led horses at once to meet the dismounted men, and the mounted reserve places itself where it may best protect the men while mounting.

On service, however, cases will often occur where the bringing forward of the led horses to meet the dismounted men would cause these horses and those in charge of them to be unnecessarily exposed to fire. Indeed, as a general rule, when these latter are well sheltered from fire and not too far from the dismounted men, it will be better for the led horses to remain stationary till their riders rejoin them, inasmuch as the small amount of time gained in bringing forward the led horses will very seldom compensate for the loss and consequent confusion which may easily be incurred by unnecessarily exposing them to fire.

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It should be borne in mind that whenever a sufficiently large number of the disposable cavalry force can be kept mounted and spared for the purpose, a feigned or real attempt to threaten or make an attack upon the enemy's rear (which can often be carried out by making a rapid detour round his flank) will often of itself have the effect of inducing him to abandon his position and retreat.

In deciding whether a vigorous and prompt attack should at once be made on any small body of the enemy which may be endeavouring to bar, or at any rate to delay, the advance of a body of cavalry, the cavalry commander will do well to bear in mind that fire actions on this small scale are very seldom strongly maintained by the enemy, as it will generally be his policy to retard the cavalry force by tolerably safe methods, and not to run the risk of being cut off from his own main body by prolonging the action beyond a certain point. Moreover, in cases where the ground over which the attack has to be made is broken and enclosed, there will generally be sufficient cover for his men to enable them to bring the fight to a successful issue.

It is time now to pass on to the defensive action of dismounted cavalry.

The occasions on which dismounted cavalry will be able to render good service to its own side by defensive action will generally be far more numerous than those upon which it will be forced to take offensive action. The principles which should guide dismounted cavalry when acting on the defensive are substantially the same as those which have been already detailed.

It will best attain its object by at once occupying the 1st line of defence with all the carbines at its disposal as soon as the direction of the enemy's attack is ascertained. Thus, when dismounted cavalry is called upon temporarily to check the advance of infantry in order to gain time, or for any other purpose, it is only by bringing as strong a force as possible to bear upon the enemy, and by the inherent power that belongs to the defence, that it will be possible for it in the great majority of cases to hold its ground.

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Verdy du Vernois, in his treatise on 'The Cavalry Division in connection with the Army,' remarks upon this question of dismounted service as follows :—

'From the moment that the enemy attacks any part of the position the whole of the reserve should be brought up into the 1st line, unless there is a fear of being obliged to defend the position at other points. In this case a portion must be kept in hand in order to guard against this contingency.'

When it is a question of dismounted cavalry defending a bridge, the street of a village, or any defile, it need hardly be said that the first thing to be done is quickly to barricade the passage, road, or defile with any materials which may be ready to hand.

The annals of the American Civil War teem with instances proving that their horsemen were able to do what it is so often affirmed that European cavalry have failed in—viz. to act with boldness and skill both on foot and on horseback. Where instances are so numerous selection is somewhat difficult. The following accounts, however, of what was done by some of General Stuart's (Confederate) cavalry during his great raid on Pennsylvania in October 1862 will serve to illustrate the great results which may be achieved by cavalry which has acquired an aptitude for fighting on foot when occasion may require it to do so.

On this expedition the first serious attack that General Stuart encountered from the Federal troops took place near a town called Poolesville. The account may perhaps best be given in General Stuart's own words :—'I ordered the charge, which was responded to in handsome style by the advance squadron (Irving's) of Lee's brigade, which drove back the enemy's cavalry upon the column of infantry advancing to occupy the crest from which the cavalry were driven. Quick as thought Lee's sharpshooters sprang to the ground, and engaging the infantry skirmishers, held them in check till the artillery in advance came up, which, under the gallant Pelham, drove back the enemy's force upon the batteries beyond the Monocacy.

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'Occupying the crest, which he used as a screen to cover his real movement, Stuart made a rapid dash to his left to White's Ford, which was guarded by 200 infantry strongly posted in the cliffs. A few shells from the small guns and the attack of the dismounted cavalry soon drove off these enemies, and the passage of the ford was effected with all the regularity of the passage of a defile at drill. The enemy came up just as the whole force had safely effected its crossing.'

The importance of cavalry being able to dismount and fight on foot is plainly manifested in this skirmish near Poolesville, which has just been described. Here the same men charged as cavalry, drove back the enemy's horsemen from the crest of a hill, then dismounting, by their fire checked the advance of the enemy's infantry long enough to enable the artillery and the remainder of the column to come up to their assistance.[1]

Again, let us take another instance of what the American horsemen could be trained to achieve.

At Trenton, in December 1862, Forrest 'charged the enemy with a portion of his cavalry, mounted, and drove them into a fortified position which they had strengthened with a breastwork of cotton bales and hogsheads of tobacco. Halting within 50 yards, he withdrew his force some 200 or 300 yards, so as to obtain cover, and then dismounting these same men and bringing up some guns, he opened such a fire of small arms and artillery that the Federals soon surrendered, and his small force, consisting only of his cavalry escort and of a few artillery, in all not more than 275 men, were able to sum up the fruits of their victory. They amounted to 400 prisoners of war, 300 negroes, 1,000 horses and mules, 13 waggons, 7 caissons, 400,000 of small arm ammunition, together with a great quantity of equipment stores, &c. This was all obtained by a gallant charge of about 200 horsemen, which drove the enemy into their entrenchments, followed by a bold attack by these horsemen acting dismounted as infantry.[2]

[1] Denison's *History of Cavalry*, pp. 452–3. [2] Ibid. p. 457.

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Once more, it is well known that in the Franco-German war neither the French nor the German cavalry had been much trained or practised in fighting on foot. Indeed, the latter in the earlier stages of the campaign were quite unable to do so, inasmuch as they had only the clumsy old armaments of 60 or 70 years ago, and had no carbines at all —a deficiency which crippled its usefulness on numberless occasions during the war. Some of the French regiments were, however, better provided, and their cavalry was on several occasions employed dismounted with success.

Thus Colonel Clery, in his 'Minor Tactics,' relates as follows :—

'At the battle of Spicheren the necessity for sending reinforcements to the front left only 2 squadrons of dragoons and a company of sappers (French) to hold Forbach. On the approach of the advanced guard of the 13th Prussian Division the dragoons dismounted, and, occupying an entrenchment, held the Prussians in check for a time by their fire in conjunction with that of the sappers. When finally outflanked and outnumbered, they remounted and retired to a position in rear, having first charged the enemy.

'Again, on August 31, Clérembault's cavalry division having got separated from the infantry, a squadron dismounted to hold the enemy's infantry in check until their own had come up. The fire from the village of Corny in their front became so galling that a regiment of dragoons was dismounted and ordered to attack the village. This they did successfully, and held it till their own infantry arrived.'

As a good instance of how the German cavalry was continually crippled and hampered in its action by the want of an efficient fire-arm, the following incident, as related by an English officer in the Prussian cavalry, who served with his corps throughout the war, may here be quoted :—

'On December 23 the 11th Cavalry Brigade, consisting of a cuirassier, dragoon, and Uhlan regiment, was brought to a standstill before the village of Vibray. The dragoon officer in command of the advanced guard reporting the village to be occupied by infantry, General von Barby

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decided, as it was getting dark, to bivouac his brigade for the night before the place. The next morning my squadron relieved the dragoons and took the advance guard of the brigade, myself being ordered to command the advanced guard of the squadron. The orders I received were, "Vibray is still occupied. If you are fired upon, send one man back to report, leave two to watch the road we are advancing on, and gallop through the town with the remainder." We were fired on, and I galloped through the town, receiving a parting volley, fired from their horses by a dozen Chasseurs d'Afrique, who then made off in the opposite direction.'[1]

Here was an instance of a whole cavalry brigade being stopped by 12 cavalry men armed with carbines, an impossibility if only a regiment, or even a squadron, of the German brigade had been armed with an effective fire-arm.

From the experiences and doings of the Russian cavalry in the Russo-Turkish campaign of 1877–8 there is, unfortunately, far less to be gathered than might naturally be expected regarding dismounted service. In that campaign the Russians employed a considerable number of their dragoons, and these troops seem to have done what work they had to do fairly well. There appears, however, as has already been remarked, to have been a singular want of dash and enterprise upon the part of the Russian cavalry leaders, and in any case, whatever may have been the cause, the cavalry failed throughout the war to play any very prominent part. The dragoons, however, rendered excellent service during the first of General Gourko's two famous raids across the Balkans, a short account of which will be found in another chapter. In this expedition Gourko, with a brigade of dragoons, captured Tirnova, a town of 60,000 inhabitants, on July 7, 1877, which was held by 3 battalions of Turkish infantry.[2] A few days later (July 12) Kazanlik was also captured by some

[1] See Lecture on 'Mounted Riflemen,' given at the United Service Institution on June 3, 1881, by Captain J. R. Lumley, late 15th Prussian Uhlans.

[2] It should be stated that the opposition offered by these Turkish battalions was of the slightest character.

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dismounted dragoons, in spite of some considerable opposition on the part of the Turks. Subsequently, in covering Gourko's retreat, the dragoons several times fought on foot and did good service.

Finally, let us take another instance of more recent date, which serves conclusively to show what a field is open in future warfare for this kind of fighting. Our short and disastrous campaign with the Boers in South Africa, which will be fresh in the recollection of most of my readers, showed us to our cost what formidable foes an irregular body of troops, who are well mounted, are armed with good rifles, and who know how to use them, may easily become.

Having in the foregoing pages given a few instances of the services which dismounted cavalry have rendered in recent campaigns, it will be well to pass on to the consideration of one or two important points connected with this subject.

One of the recognised drawbacks of using cavalry dismounted is the comparatively small proportion of the available force which can be brought into action and utilised for the actual fight. It is obvious that this proportion depends mainly upon two points—viz., upon the number of horses which each man who remains mounted holds, and upon the number of men which it is thought necessary to retain for the protection of the led horses. This proportion of men who can be utilised for the actual fight is about the same in most of the chief armies of Europe. A cursory comparison of the system adopted with regard to this matter in some of the chief Continental armies may be found instructive.

In the French cavalry 2 men out of every 3 dismount, and consequently each horse-holder holds 2 horses besides his own.

In the German cavalry the same system prevails. In the Austrian cavalry also 2 men out of every 3 dismount. When the Russian dragoons dismount Nos. 1 and 3 of threes dismount, while No. 2 remains mounted as horse-holder. Thus here also two-thirds of the rank and file are available for dismounted service.

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With regard to our own service, it may be remarked that up to within a short time ago only every other man dismounted, and therefore each horse-holder who remained mounted held only one horse besides his own. So long as this was the rule, a British cavalry squadron, when acting dismounted, brought 50 per cent. less carbines into action than a squadron of equal strength in most other Continental armies. This grave defect has now been remedied, inasmuch as during the year 1883 an order was issued that in each section one man should hold the horses of the other three, who should dismount.[1] Hence it follows that under present regulations in our cavalry we now bring into action a larger, instead of a smaller, proportion of carbines than is done in most Continental armies, the proportion with us being now 3 to 4, and on the Continent 2 to 3. This is, of course, due to our section being composed of 4 men instead of 3.

But even with a system which allows of 3 out of 4 being dismounted the proportion of men out of a squadron who can bring their carbines into action in dismounted service is, when the necessary demands upon its strength have been made, comparatively small. Thus in a squadron of 48 files, when one-third, or at least one-fourth, of it has been told off as a protection to the led horses, there remain 32 or 36 files available. Of these latter one-fourth are occupied as horse-holders, which leaves a balance of 24 or 27 files to use their carbines. To have only 48 out of 96 carbines available for action against the enemy is, after all, only a very moderate result; but it is at any rate a better one than is attained in most Continental armies.

Another question which is worth considering is whether the horse-holders of each section should, when holding their comrades' 3 horses, be mounted or dismounted. This is a

[1] As will be well known to many of my readers, when a greater number of carbines are required and when circumstances admit of its being done, all the men dismount, the horses are linked, and only a few men are left in charge of them. It is obvious, however, that it is only rarely on active service that this plan of linking horses could, when cavalry is required to act dismounted, be safely resorted to.

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point which has been a good deal discussed in the French cavalry and elsewhere. There can, I think, be little doubt that any officer who has practically tested this question, and tried both methods with his men, will own that the latter method—i.e. of having the horse-holders dismounted—has certain undoubted advantages. A man when dismounted has more command over 3 or 4 horses than he has when he remains mounted, especially if any of them are fidgety and restive. Another advantage is that he is far less exposed to fire. The only drawback to the plan is that when the 'Mount' is sounded, and the men who have been acting dismounted rejoin their horses, the horse-holders have also to mount, and they should not do this till their dismounted comrades have rejoined their horses. This drawback, however, may fairly be held to be compensated by the fact that they have better command over their horses while holding them, and are, moreover, less exposed to fire.

There is another point with respect to dismounted service to which all cavalry soldiers will do well to take heed—viz., the absolute necessity of withdrawing dismounted men in plenty of time to rejoin their horses. On this subject Verdy du Vernois remarks as follows :—'In acting dismounted it is not only necessary to occupy a position or vantage ground from which the men can make use of their fire-arms, but also to devote quite as much attention towards assuring the retreat of the dismounted men in *good time*, so as to allow them to remount in comparative security ; and carefully to adopt this practice to the real exigencies of actual warfare. It is not always easy to observe this precaution, but it is the more necessary to do so, because at manœuvres the men always succeed in remounting their horses, and the squadron then retires at a trot and in good order, even when the enemy's skirmishers are only about 100 paces off.'

Another precaution which a commander will find it most advisable to take in dismounted service, especially in cases where the led horses are brought up to meet the dismounted men when the latter are ordered to mount, is to see that the horses are brought up in the same order and formation as

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they were in when the men dismounted. In order to show the importance of this it is only necessary to show what happens when no heed is given to this point. Thus when a squadron is in column of sections right in front the order is given, 'With carbines, dismount.' Three men of each section dismount, and while the dismounted men are engaged in firing the column of mounted men with led horses goes off a short distance to some convenient spot sheltered from fire. When 'Mount' is sounded, and the men run to rejoin their horses, it may be that the commander of the column of led horses trots up the column to meet the dismounted men halfway in column of sections, but *left* in front. What is the consequence? None of the dismounted men, who naturally expect to find their horses in the same place in the column as they were when they dismounted, can at once find their horses. Even in a small column this is productive of great confusion and delay, and that too at the very moment when it is most important that there should be nothing of the kind.

There are various occasions when one or two squadrons judiciously posted might be able to render signal services to its own side. Supposing, for instance, a brigade is forced to retire before superior numbers, a squadron or two dismounted and posted, when the ground admits of it, in a favourable spot, would often, by their fire, be able to arrest for some time the enemy's pursuit and prevent a retreat degenerating into a rout.

Again, suppose that a squadron of, say, 48 files is detailed to protect a battery of artillery, and that whilst the guns are in action a small body of hostile infantry skirmishers threaten to creep up so close to the guns as practically to silence them by their fire: under such circumstances a cavalry leader would often do well to employ some portion of his men dismounted to keep the skirmishers in check. Similarly, should an attack upon the guns be feared by hostile cavalry, if 6 sections (i.e. 24 men) were employed dismounted, 18 of them would have their carbines available for action; 18 or 20 carbines judiciously posted might, in

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many cases, greatly strengthen the defensive powers of the squadron, and in the event of an attack being made upon the guns by the enemy, might easily so check and weaken his onset as either to render it abortive or make the subsequent discomfiture of the attacking force a comparatively easy task.

Let us take another instance in which a few dismounted men might often be usefully employed.

When a body of cavalry is detailed for the protection of artillery (one of the most ordinary duties which falls to the lot of the cavalry arm) a few dismounted men will, whenever circumstances permit of this being done, greatly strengthen the capabilities of the cavalry for the defence and protection of the guns they have to guard.

Finally, let us take one more instance in which the judicious use and handling of cavalry dismounted may prove of the utmost value—viz. in a pursuit.

Let an instance be supposed in which a force of the enemy has been defeated, or is so hardly pressed that he thinks it advisable to retreat. The commander of a cavalry brigade, say, of 2 regiments (of the pursuing force) and a battery of horse artillery receives the order to follow up the enemy and retard his retreat in every possible way till the main body of the pursuing force can come up with him. All details as to the manner in which this order is to be carried out are left (as they should be) to the discretion of the cavalry leader. How can he best carry out this service and effect the object in view? His action would, of course, depend upon circumstances; but one of the more obvious methods which (provided that the nature of the country admitted of his doing so) he might adopt, would be to make a more or less wide detour with the force at his disposal, avoiding all hostile infantry in close formation, and then by passing beyond the enemy's forces and ahead of them to cut in again upon his line of retreat, so as to bar and delay his further progress. This might be done by selecting some village, wood, defile, or other favourable spot where the guns of the horse artillery might be favourably placed in position, and where all the available men of one of the cavalry corps

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might be dismounted and posted so as with their carbine fire to harass and delay the enemy as long as possible. Meanwhile the 2nd regiment would pass on still further to the rear, and having dismounted all its available men in a similar manner, would repeat the same tactics. Thus the retreating force, as soon as it had succeeded, at the cost of some time and men, in overcoming or brushing away the resistance offered by the dismounted men of the 1st cavalry regiment, finds itself after a brief interval confronted by a fresh line of fire. Meanwhile the 1st cavalry regiment and the horse artillery, who have delayed the enemy as long as possible, have leisure to repeat the same manœuvre and to take up a position at some point in rear of the 2nd regiment, in order to repeat the same tactics and again attack the enemy as he retreats at some favourable spot. By thus alternately passing a body of cavalry to the rear in this manner the enemy would find himself confronted with an ever fresh line of fire, inflicting loss upon him, perhaps forcing him to deploy a portion of his troops, and in any case retarding his progress and delaying his retreat. Under such circumstances even first-rate troops might easily become so shaken and demoralised as to render their total rout, or even their capture, a comparatively easy matter for the pursuing force.

Let not any young cavalry officer suppose that the above is a mere theoretical or fanciful sketch of what a body of cavalry, when properly trained and in the hands of a leader of the progressive school who understands how best to utilise his men in pursuit, might be made to effect. The annals of the American Civil War show that cavalry may be used precisely in this manner and with the most signal and decisive results. By far the most striking instance in any modern campaign of important results being achieved by the action of dismounted cavalry was the part played by the Federal cavalry during the last closing scenes of the American Civil War, when General Sheridan, in conjunction with General Grant, was following up the final retreat of the Confederate army. The manner in which the Federal cavalry was then

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handled may perhaps be best described *verbatim* as given by Colonel Denison in his well-known work, from which such frequent quotations have been made in this chapter.

'While Grant followed with the main army Sheridan came up with the Confederate rear guard, 10,000 strong, between Deatonsville and Sailor's Creek. And now occurred an extraordinary and original method of using cavalry in a pursuit. Sheridan saw that the force of the Confederate rear guard was too great for him to be able to defeat them by a direct attack. He decided, therefore, to move westwardly, to get upon their flank, when the leading division of the cavalry was ordered to attack the flank of the train and the escorting column. As the enemy were strong in numbers and splendid soldiers, this division could only delay and harass them on their march; but the other divisions moved on in the rear of the line of dismounted horsemen, which held fast and annoyed the enemy with their fire. Each division in turn attacked the columns farther on in flank, so that moving on successively, Crook's, Custer's, and Deven's divisions swept ahead of the retreating column, crossed Sailor's Creek before them, and rapidly taking position on the high ground on the far side of the stream, they formed in line, dismounted, and placing themselves directly on the path of the enemy, with their fire-arms disputed his passage.

'The result of this manœuvre on the part of Sheridan's cavalry was the capture of 16 guns, 400 waggons, and many prisoners. The strength of the position they had assumed, and the defensive power obtained by the effective fire of their dismounted men with their long-range repeating rifles, enabled them to intercept in their retreat, and delay till they were captured, three whole divisions of the Confederate infantry.

'By one same method of tactics the pursuit was resumed, the retreat to Lynchburg cut off by wide turning movements of the cavalry, who dismounted, checked the retreat, and so brought about the surrender of the whole of Lee's army at Appomatox Court House on April 9.'[1]

[1] Denison's *History of Cavalry*, pp. 480–1.

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Sir Henry Havelock, in commenting on this affair, remarks as follows :—'The mode in which Sheridan, from the special arming and training of his cavalry, was able to deal with this rear guard, first to overtake it in retreat, then to pass completely beyond it, to turn, face it, and take up at leisure a position strong enough to enable him to detain it, in spite of its naturally fierce and determined efforts to break through, is highly characteristic of the self-reliant, all-sufficing efficiency to which at this time the Northern horsemen had been brought.

'The mounted rifle plan of fighting on foot from behind cover made the detaining fire of the Federal cavalry galling and effectual as that of the best infantry, while by their method of the alternate passing on of mounted bodies in rear of their dismounted skirmishers, those mounted bodies again dismounting in selected positions farther on in their turn, they were enabled to present to the Confederates an impenetrable hedge, constantly falling back, and thus avoiding actual contact, but unbroken, continuous, sheltered by obstacles of ground, and constantly emitting in their faces a fire most deadly in its precision and sustained rapidity. They were thus enabled always to keep ahead, and always to present an impassable barrier to further retreat, while they themselves, from being completely covered, avoided any serious loss.'[1]

With such facts and feats to rely upon as have in the chapter been cited, any cavalry officer may feel himself justified in thinking that in the wars of the future, dismounted cavalry, when properly trained, skilfully handled, and boldly led, may oftentimes have a great part to play.

Coming down to the most recent fighting the British army has had—viz. that in the Soudan, it may be pointed out that our cavalry gave an instructive example at the battle of Tamasi of how usefully cavalry can be employed dismounted. Our experience at El Teb had shown how little impression could be made on the Soudanese by mounted action, inasmuch as our cavalry in that fight seem to have suffered far more loss than they inflicted on their foes. But

[1] Denison's *History of Cavalry*, p. 483.

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at Tamasi other tactics were resorted to, for when General Davis's square was broken, and was being so hardly pressed, Colonel Wood took the cavalry forward at the gallop for a short distance, and, dismounting them, poured an effective carbine fire into the Arabs who were assailing the front of the broken square, and thus assisted materially in creating a diversion in its favour.

In order to avoid misconceptions it will be as well, before bringing this chapter to a close, to sum up the circumstances and conditions under which dismounted service may be resorted to by cavalry with a fair chance of success.

These conditions, &c., may be broadly stated as follows :—

1. When from circumstances or the nature of the ground there is nothing to be hoped for from mounted action.

2. When the desired result is likely to be at once attained by the prompt and decisive action of dismounted men.

3. When it is important at all hazards to retard and delay the progress of the enemy.

4. When there is good shelter for the led horses during the attack and defence of a position.

5. The men should be properly trained and able to shoot fairly well. To attempt dismounted service with men who have had but little practice and training in this duty is always a hazardous experiment and may very easily lead to disaster.

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CHAPTER XV.

CAVALRY RAIDS.

Possibility of raids forming an important portion of duties of cavalry in future campaigns—Instances of raids in the Napoleonic wars—Definition of a raid—Different aims and objects of raids—Raids in American Civil War—Morgan's raids in Kentucky—Stuart's raid round McClellan's army—His raid through Pennsylvania—Account of Forrest's raids—Grierson's raids—Stoneman's raids—Details of the manner in which these operations were carried out—Want of enterprise of cavalry in Austro-Prussian campaign of 1866—Operations by German cavalry in Franco-German campaign—Gourko's raid across the Balkans in Russo-Turkish campaign of 1877-8—Raid of English cavalry upon Cairo in Egyptian campaign—Account of raids as practised by Russian cavalry.

THERE can be no doubt that in all future campaigns, wherever there is a numerous and highly organised body of cavalry on either side, and when the country which is the theatre of war is favourable, cavalry raids or incursions into the enemy's country of more or less duration will be one of the most important duties of the cavalry arm. In the Napoleonic campaigns of 1813 and 1814 the Russian cavalry produced some first-rate cavalry leaders,[1] and the operations which they organised and led were conceived and carried out in a far bolder manner than in any previous campaigns of the age. Among the most famous and important of the cavalry exploits which were carried out at this time may be mentioned Tchernikeff's operations far in rear of the French

[1] Of these leaders the Grand Duke Constantine, Platoff Palen, Tchernikeff, Orloff Denizoff, may be named as some of those who were conspicuous at this period.

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army, after the battle of Grossbeeren, in the autumn of 1813. On this occasion this Russian leader advanced at the head of 3,000 horsemen and 4 guns into the heart of Westphalia and captured and retained possession of Cassel, the capital of that kingdom, for more than a week.

Another important success of a similar nature was the capture of Hamburg in 1813 by Tettenborn, another Cossack leader of note.

Coming down, however, to the latter half of this century, the American Civil War was, as is well known, the first of the more modern campaigns in which these expeditions were developed and carried out on a scale and to an extent which was before unknown, and in which it was first shown to the military world what great and important results could in modern warfare be obtained by these bold and swiftly executed operations of cavalry.

It may be asked what, in the modern acceptation of the term, is a cavalry raid?

In general terms a cavalry raid may be described as essentially an act of surprise rather than of force. Its primary aims are usually to destroy and render useless for a time railways, telegraph lines, stations, stores and bridges, magazines, &c. &c., to scatter disorder, and to excite apprehension in the mind of the enemy, and not to fight unless it becomes necessary to do so. Its secondary objects are to bring back useful information, to make prisoners, to spread false news, &c. &c.

It is evident that such operations as these entail wide circuits and the traversing of long distances, and that secrecy and rapidity must usually be conditions which are essential to their success.

It is equally obvious that the more extended the front of a hostile army is, the more difficult it must be to execute raids in its rear. Both the Federal and the Confederate cavalry freely practised this method of warfare, and no one can read and follow out on the map accounts of Morgan's raids, of Forrest's expeditions, of Stuart's great sweeping reconnaissances, of Grierson's operations in Mississippi, of

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Wilson's invading cavalry, of Sheridan's pursuits, without realising what great and important results both large and small bodies of cavalry under leaders of such stamp as these may in modern warfare hope to achieve. It is obvious, moreover, that such operations as these when boldly planned and carried out give great scope for that spirit of enterprise which is the life and soul of the cavalry arm.

The duration or period of time occupied by these raids or dashes may vary from a day to a week, or even more, according to the nature of the work which has to be done and the distance which has to be traversed before the contemplated work can be carried out.

Similarly, the strength of the bodies of cavalry employed in such services as these varies according to circumstances. In some of the great raids of the American Civil War, the bodies of cavalry employed were of considerable strength—viz. from 1,500 to 2,000 strong,[1] while in more recent campaigns far smaller bodies have sufficed for the object in view. In short, bodies of cavalry of any strength, from a division down to small parties of from 15 to 20 men, have been employed in this manner in recent campaigns.

Again, the aim and object with which these raids may be made are manifold. They may be directed against one or more of the enemy's lines of communication, or with the view of destroying his magazines, or accumulations of stores. In such cases these expeditions may have for their special object the destruction of railway stations, lines, or junctions,

[1] Towards the latter end of the American Civil War the strength of the Federal horsemen far exceeded these numbers. When the Federal General Wilson set out on his expedition through Alabama in March 1865, nearly his whole force consisted of horsemen to the number of 12,000 men. Again, when undertaking the operations which finally brought the war to a close in the spring of 1865, General Sheridan had under his command a cavalry corps 10,000 strong. These numbers must however be looked upon as wholly exceptional, when merely raids are intended to be made. It is obvious indeed that cavalry bodies of such strength could never be used with the suddenness, secrecy, and rapidity which are the essential characteristics of a cavalry raid.

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of placing telegraph lines *hors de service*, or of blowing up a bridge at an important strategical point. Sometimes they may be made with the object of anticipating the enemy in the possession of some point which it may be deemed desirable to seize as soon as possible, and to hold until infantry have time to come up and relieve the cavalry who have pushed forward to secure it. Such, for instance, was the march of the British cavalry upon Cairo, and its capture of that city on September 19, 1882, immediately after the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. At other times these raids may be made merely with the object of making a reconnaissance, or, as in the case of General Gourko's raids across the Balkans, in order to cut off the enemy's retreat, or to threaten his rear.

Once more, they may be made in order to lay waste the country from which the enemy draws supplies and to deprive him of the possible use of them.

In order to show as clearly as possible how cavalry has thus been employed in recent warfare, it will be as well first to describe somewhat in detail some of the more notable of these raids on a large scale which have taken place during comparatively recent campaigns, and then to go on to give examples of some of the smaller expeditions which have been carried out, and which, in any future campaign, may be expected to fall to the lot of the cavalry to perform. In narrating these raids it will only be natural and fitting to begin with those of the American Civil War.

General J. H. Morgan, a Kentuckian, a man who had no professional training as a soldier, is generally credited by the Americans with having been the first to realise that a long-range weapon gave the dragoon, or mounted soldier, a great advantage which he never possessed with the old-fashioned carbine.

He quickly realised the fact that many of his cavalrymen, owing to the fact of their being habitual riders and trained to the use of the rifle from their earliest years, might easily be taught to unite the two great advantages of rapidity of movement and of precision of fire. Impressed with the

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truth of this idea, he was the first to organise a force of cavalry which could move rapidly and fight, either on foot or mounted, as occasion might require. Not only was he the first to organise a force of this description, but he was also the first to set the example of making extensive raids in the enemy's rear. He had an able fellow-worker in General Forrest, and to these two Southern generals, 'both unprofessional men, is to be attributed the credit of having originated and adopted a system of cavalry tactics, we may even say strategy, that was new in many of its features and a most successful adaptation of the modern improved fire-arm to the use of horsemen.'[1]

The example of these two officers was soon followed by other partisan leaders on both sides, and after the first two years of the war there were numerous bodies of these troops which had been trained and organised on this system. It was with these troops that raids against the enemy were invariably carried out.

General Morgan's first important raid was made into Kentucky in 1862.[2]

'He started from Knoxville, Tennessee, on July 4, and moved through Sparta and Glasgow to Lebanon, where large supplies of stores of every kind were captured. From Lebanon Morgan marched to Harrodsburg, from there on to Lawrenceburg, and then to Midway, a station on the railway between Frankfort and Lexington. The latter place was the head-quarters of the Federal forces in the region, and both at that point and at Frankfort were large bodies of Federal troops much superior to the force which Morgan had under his command.

'By skilful marches, by scattering his forces and threatening several points at once, the Federal officers were completely bewildered, and did not know when to expect a blow. The extreme mobility of his flying column also rendered it difficult to obtain any correct information as to Morgan's force or his intentions. The marching capacity of the

[1] Denison's *History of Cavalry*, p. 465.

[2] See Map IV

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column may be judged of from the fact that at the time it reached Midway it had marched over 300 miles in 8 days, and the men were still fresh and in high spirits.

'The raid was very successful, and the results may best be summed up in the words of General Morgan's report, in which he says :—

' "I left Knoxville on the 4th day of the month with about 900 men, and returned to Livingstone on the 28th with nearly 1,200 men, having been absent just 24 days, during which time I have travelled over 1,000 miles, captured 17 towns, destroyed all the Government supplies and arms in them, dispersed nearly 1,500 Home Guards, and paroled nearly 1,200 regular troops. I lost in killed, wounded, and missing of the number that I carried into Kentucky about 90."

'General Buell's army was obliged to fall back to Louisville in August 1862, in consequence of a second raid made by Morgan's corps, in which he took possession of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, in Buell's rear, at Gallatin, and so cut off his communications with his base.' [1]

Another gallant Southern general who performed most valuable service, and made himself a great reputation by his bold and daring raids, was General J. E. B. Stuart. 'Under this brilliant commander the Confederate horsemen on two occasions made raids round the whole position of the enemy, going round by one flank and returning by the other. The first great raid was that made round McClellan's army, in front of Richmond, in June 1862.[2] It was, in reality, a reconnaissance on a large scale, but partook somewhat of the character of a raid, as a great deal of damage was inflicted upon the Federals by the destruction of stores, of ammunition, and provisions.

'Stuart made the complete circuit of the Federal army. His force consisted of 2,500 cavalry and 2 pieces of horse artillery. Setting out from Taylorsville, the little column forced its way through the Federal lines, driving off the various bodies that attempted to resist their advance. A

[1] Col. Denison's *History of Cavalry*, pp. 446–7.

[2] See Map V.

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number of transports on the Pamunkey were also taken and destroyed, and convoys of supplies of great quantities seized and burnt. Having passed the rear of the whole Federal army and destroyed the railroad, Stuart effected safely the passage of the Chickahominy River on their left flank, and safely returned to the Confederate lines, having thoroughly acquainted himself with the enemy's position, which was the main object of the expedition.

'This was partly in the nature of an armed reconnaissance and partly secret, as they tried to avoid fighting and to conceal their movements as much as possible, while they were quite ready to attack whatever appeared to bar their passage.'

Stuart's troops, in this raid, destroyed nearly all the enemy's communications, burnt an enormous amount of property, captured a large number of prisoners, horses, and baggage animals, and spead dismay and consternation through the whole Federal army.

'The information gained by this raid was exceedingly valuable, and enabled General Lee to plan the splendid operations called "the seven days' battles," in which Stonewall Jackson, a few days after, fell upon the flank and rear of McClellan's army with perfect confidence and such terrible effect.'

A few weeks later, on August 22, 1862, General Stuart made a similar raid upon the rear of General Pope's army, which was completely successful.

'Shortly after this last exploit—viz. on the 9th October, 1862—General Stuart made his greatest raid—viz. that through Pennsylvania, round the Northern army. He set out with a force of 1,800 cavalry and 4 pieces of horse artillery, and on the 10th crossed the Potomac River, and moved rapidly towards Mercersburg, which was reached at noon, and then Chambersburg, which was occupied at dark. The telegraph lines were cut in every direction, the railways obstructed, and large numbers of horses captured. All the public stores and buildings were destroyed. At Chambersburg General Stuart's position was very critical. He was

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directly in rear of the whole Federal army in a hostile country, and some 90 miles from his own lines. He considered it too dangerous to attempt to return by the route he had come, and decided to make a wide sweep to the east, and cross the Potomac some distance below the Federal army in the neighbourhood of Leesburg.

'Every precaution was taken to deceive the enemy. Stuart first marched towards Gettysburg, then turned south to Hagerstown, and then turned east again towards Emmetsburg, through which he passed, and moved towards Frederick, then, turning short to the east again, he marched in the night through Liberty, Newmarket, and Monrovia, where he cut the wires and the railroad. At daylight he reached Hyattstown, on McClellan's line of communications with Washington, where he captured a few waggons and then pushed on to Barnesville.'

Finally, at a town called Poolesville, Stuart encountered a body of the enemy belonging to a force under General Stoneman, which had been sent to guard the fords of the Potomac, and to prevent his crossing that river. This was the first serious attack he had encountered during the expedition. After a spirited and well-contested combat, in which the Southern cavalry especially distinguished itself by its aptitude for fighting on foot equally well as mounted, Stuart drove back the enemy opposed to him, and made a dash to his left to get possession of White's Ford, which was guarded by 200 infantry posted in the cliffs. Despite the strenuous opposition of the Federals, he succeeded in keeping the force opposed to him at bay, and, getting possession of the ford, he passed his whole force across it.

In this raid 'Stuart's loss was trifling, while the information gained, the moral effect secured, and the consternation caused in the Northern forces were of the greatest importance. His cavalry marched on this expedition from Chambersburg to Leesburg, some 90 miles, in 36 hours, one of the most remarkable marches recorded in history.' [1]

Another officer who distinguished himself on the Con-

[1] Denison's *History of Cavalry*, pp. 449–53.

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federate side by his daring and successful cavalry operations during the Civil War was General Forrest. This officer, as is well known to students of that campaign, gave many proofs of his ability as a cavalry leader, and was remarkable for the varied kind of services which he made his troops perform.

'The first action in which he was engaged was an extraordinary one, between his regiment and a gunboat carrying 9 heavy guns, and protected by iron plates. The gunboat had been sent to Canton, on the Cumberland River, to destroy a quantity of Confederate stores which were lying there. Forrest heard of the intended attack, and by a night march of 30 miles reached the point before the arrival of the gunboat. He at once dismounted his men, and placed them under cover of trees and logs along the bank of the river. The gunboat moved up, anchored, and opened a heavy fire of grapeshot and canister. Forrest's men, skilful marksmen, and well sheltered, fired through the open ports at close range, with such perfect accuracy and deadly effect as to compel the vessel to close her ports and get away as fast as possible.'

Again, in August 1864, Forrest, at the head of a body of cavalry, made a brilliant dash at Memphis, and, by a *coup de main*, captured that large city, which was occupied by greatly superior forces of the enemy. On this occasion he took a large number of prisoners, and effected his retreat with little or no loss. Many other brilliant feats were achieved by this able leader, which will be found fully detailed in the history of his campaigns.[1]

Let us turn for a short time to see how the Federals endeavoured to cope with this new style of warfare, which they had learnt to their cost was so successful and effective.

In the spring of 1863, says Colonel Denison, 'it was at once seen that the United States authorities had become fully impressed with the value of the new style of cavalry, and aware of the importance of having a large force to be employed in raids and excursions into the enemy's lines. During the previous winter immense efforts had been made

[1] *Campaigns of Forrest.*

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to organise large bodies of mounted riflemen, well equipped and armed and trained to fight on the new system.

The first great successful raid on the part of the Federals was that through Mississippi in 1863, commanded by General Grierson.[1] He set out from La Grange, Tennessee, on April 17 with a brigade of cavalry some 2,000 strong, and went through the whole of the State of Mississippi, ransacking the country everywhere, destroying supplies, cutting railways and telegraph lines, and burning bridges, stores, &c. He passed through Pontotoc and Decatur, and reached the Southern railway at Newton on April 29. Having destroyed some cars, engines, and bridges, he moved on to Georgetown, where he crossed the Pearl River and moved over to the New Orleans and Jackson Railroad, cut it at Hazlehurst, destroying stores and trains, and then moved down the railway to Brookhaven, where he burned the railway depôt at that point and the cars found in it. He arrived at Baton Rouge on May 2, having travelled over 300 miles through the heart of the enemy's country, inflicting serious blows upon his communications and without suffering any loss.'[2]

Let us take another instance of a Federal raid. 'A few days after Grierson's raid, the campaign of 1863 opened in Northern Virginia with another cavalry expedition by the Federal horsemen under General Stoneman in the rear of General Lee's army. This was intended to have a co-operating effect upon the attack which General Hooker was about making at Chancellorsville against the Confederate left rear. Averill set out first to draw the Southern cavalry to their left, in order to leave the way open for Stoneman with the main force to make a dash into the rear of General Lee's position. Averill had a sharp action with General W. H. F. Lee's brigade of cavalry at Rapidan Station on May 1, and during that day Stoneman with the main force, consisting of about 10,000 men, marched by Racoon Ford to Louisa Court House, which he reached early on Saturday morning, May 2, Averill the same morning falling back to the right rear of Hooker's army. W. H. F. Lee, with only 900 men, had a skirmish

[1] See Map VI.

[2] Denison's *History of Cavalry*, pp. 466–7.

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with a portion of Stoneman's command on the 2nd between Gordonsville and Louisa Court House, but was obliged in the end to fall back before the superior forces of the enemy. On the evening of the 2nd Stoneman was at Thompson's Cross Roads in the rear of the Confederate army and directly between it and its base.

'At this point he decided to spread his command and to strike out in every direction. Consequently one portion, consisting of 1 regiment under Colonel Wyndham, pushed south to Columbia on the James River, and there destroyed all the public property, captured a number of horses and mules, and rejoined Stoneman the same night at Thompson's Cross Roads.'[1] Several other detachments which were sent out from this force performed similar tasks, and finally retired in safety.

The services of the Federal cavalry during the further course of the American Civil War are well known. It may be said that under General Sheridan it was mainly instrumental in cutting off the retreat, and so bringing about the surrender of the whole of Lee's army at Appomatox Court House on April 9, 1865.

It will be seen that in this Civil War Southerners originated the employment of cavalry in the manner which has here been detailed—i.e. employing them to fight equally well on foot or mounted, as occasion required. They were very successful at first till the Federals had learnt their system, and eventually by dint of their superior equipment and overwhelming numbers beat their opponents with their own weapons.

It is interesting to read of such feats and achievements as these as having been performed by cavalry, and the military student will have no difficulty in finding full accounts of these raids, as far as their strategic aspects and results are concerned, in well-known works[2] which have been written

[1] Denison's *History of Cavalry*, p. 467.

[2] *History of Morgan's Cavalry*, by Basil W. Duke; *Campaigns of Forrest*; *History of the United States Cavalry*, by S. A. Brackett, &c.

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upon this subject. To the practical cavalry officer, however, there are many questions which a mere recital of these operations leaves wholly untouched and unexplained. How were such long and rapid marches carried out with such secrecy and success? how were the men armed and equipped? what provision was made for transport, forage, and food *en route*? how was the security of the force insured both on the march and during the necessary halts, &c. &c. ? In other words, how were the many details upon which the success of any military operation depends carried out? Upon these practical details the accounts which have been written of these operations hardly throw as much light as could be wished. Hence it may be deemed desirable in a work like the present to gather together any information upon these points which may be available, and to present it to the reader in a concise form. It is proposed with this object to examine somewhat in detail how these raids were managed by some of the more noted leaders of horse on both sides during the American Civil War, and to see how some of the important details just referred to were carried out.

Beginning with the Confederate cavalry, let us see how Morgan made preparations for his far-famed raids.

All the men who composed Morgan's force were, like their leader, volunteers, and at first all natives of Kentucky. But subsequently, when this corps had made a name for itself and had become celebrated, many officers of the regular army were eager to join it, and enrolled themselves as private soldiers. Composed as this body of cavalry was of educated intelligent men, who were for the most part good horsemen, one and all animated by the highest sense of duty and patriotism and eager to distinguish themselves, it had at the outset many elements of success.

Morgan's cavalry comprised 10 regiments of 500 men each.

When a raid had been decided upon Morgan used to make preparations for it with the greatest care. For reconnoitring and scouting he had companies of scouts who were

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chosen from the most daring and intelligent men under his command.

Some 15 or 20 days before a raid was to be begun Morgan used to send one or two companies of these scouts into the very heart of the country or district into which he meant to advance. These men, disguised in one way or another, spread in all directions, and never ceased to inform themselves of everything which could be of use to their chief —i.e. regarding the forces of the enemy, his positions, magazines, movements, intentions, &c. &c. They found out the whereabouts of the best fords over the rivers, and the least known routes by which marches could be made, and they remained in the country till the arrival of the raiders.

Morgan's horsemen wore the most simple uniform, consisting of a tunic, pants, and boots. This dress, when worn out, was as often as not replaced by civilian dress until new uniforms could be obtained.

They carried with them for a raid no change of clothes, no provisions, and not generally even a cloak. In short, the horses carried nothing but the rider and his arms, his saddle, bridle, and a blanket. The men carried with them only their ammunition (100 cartridges) and their arms, consisting of a carbine with a bayonet, with one or more revolvers. Two companies, who were told off always to fight on horseback, were the only men in all Morgan's corps who carried sabres.

Under ordinary circumstances the men had tents, and rations were carried on the march in a few waggons which accompanied the force; but in a raid they had neither baggage, nor ammunition, nor ration waggons; they literally lived on the country, and even when moving through a hostile country found in the farms and villages abundant provisions. The only chance they had of replenishing their stock of cartridges was when they were fortunate enough to find some in the towns through which they passed. Thus on one occasion it happened (viz. in that raid in 1863 which terminated in Morgan's capture) that his men were obliged completely to change their fire-arms for those of the enemy whom they had killed or taken prisoners, inasmuch as the

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ammunition found on these latter was useless for their own arms.

The usual pace during the march was the walk, and at this pace they generally marched about four miles an hour. As Morgan's troops often marched 15 or 16 hours out of the 24, they were able to cover in this way from 60 to 70 miles a day.[1]

This rate of pace admitted of foraging parties being sent into the villages and farms on each side of the route to procure the provisions and forage which were necessary for man and beast. It also admitted of efficient measures being taken to ensure the safety of the column *en route*, and also to requisition horses to supply the places of those which were knocked up. The fact of these raids having been made through a highly civilised country, where fresh horses could generally be procured when wanted, goes far to explain the great distances which were often traversed in so short a time by these American horsemen.

In general, neither men nor horses entered a house or a stable. The men lay down by the side of the road and got what shelter they could under walls and trees, and slept with their bridles in their hands. The horses were never unsaddled or the girths loosened, except when there was a comparatively long halt. When the horses were fed they were unbridled, and what forage the foragers had been able to gather in *en route* was put before them. On some occasions, however, the horses were nearly 24 hours without food or water. It need hardly be said that these raids were of the most exhausting nature for man and beast.

In Morgan's corps the service of scouting, reconnaissance, and outposts was carried out with the greatest care; there was nothing, however, in this respect peculiar in his way of carrying out this important duty, as he merely applied those methods which are now prescribed and practised in most modern armies. It may be observed, however, that General

[1] It was in 1863 that Morgan made his greatest march. He travelled, in 35 hours, the distance from Susmansville (Indiana) to Williamsburg, situated to the east of Cincinnati, a distance of 90 miles.

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Morgan was one of the first cavalry leaders in recent times who put into practice the now recognised method of sending out scouting parties far ahead—i.e. from 15 to 20 miles ahead of the main body. This plan was not followed in any of the more recent European campaigns till the Franco-German War. It may also be remarked that Morgan's cavalry force always marched on one road.

With regard to Morgan's tactics and method of fighting, his main principle of action was based upon this idea: that if one wished to surprise the enemy, and to succeed in any operation against him, it was necessary to do that which the latter would deem improbable or impossible. He had, moreover, a special gift of divining the projects of his enemy, and for thwarting them by opportune action. In general he attacked at the beginning of a raid any body of the enemy he met with the greatest energy and vigour, in order to create a great moral effect, but when once the object of a raid had been attained he avoided any conflict as much as possible.

Though Morgan's men were for the most part admirable horsemen, the nature of the country often prevented movements or attacks being made across country, and it therefore soon came to pass that they always fought on foot—i.e. in other words, as mounted infantry.

The manner of fighting which was employed may be described as follows:—

On arrival at the place of combat one of the troops on the flanks went forward, and, deploying in skirmishing order, covered the front. Meanwhile the main body dismounted, and each horse-holder had to hold 4, or even 8 horses when a large number of combatants was required. These latter formed a single rank, with intervals of 2 or 3 yards between each man, in a line which was slightly concave, the extremities of the line being advanced towards the enemy. When once deployed this line advanced at the double, while the skirmishers cleared the front. When the ground offered sufficient shelter the men generally deployed only 1 line to make an attack.

When, however, the ground was open, 2 or even 3 lines

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were formed, each exactly in rear of the one in front of it. The distances of these lines from each other was regulated by circumstances. The 1st line opened fire and lay down; thereupon the 2nd line immediately advanced, and, passing through the intervals of the front, went forward to a certain distance, opened fire in its turn, and lay down. The 1st line then advanced again in its turn in the same way, and the attack was continued thus, the rearmost line always passing through the intervals of the line which had just made an advance to the front. Both front and flank attacks were carried out in this way.

When once they had got within close range of the enemy it was the invariable custom of Morgan's men to use their revolvers.

With Morgan, moreover, it was a favourite manœuvre to hold the enemy and engage his attention by feints on his front while with a considerable portion of his force he made a wide turning, and then, having reached the point he aimed at in the enemy's rear, his men dismounted and fought on foot, in order to strike an effective blow.

With regard to artillery, Morgan generally took with him 4 howitzers and 2 Parrott guns. These latter long-range pieces were seldom used except during retreats.

Let us pass on from Morgan and glance rapidly at the manner in which another cavalry leader of equal renown carried out his famous raids.

Forrest's corps consisted of 3 divisions. Each division had 3 brigades, and each brigade 2 regiments, in all about 6,000 men. In his principal raids, however, he generally took with him 1,500 or 2,000 horsemen. These were accompanied by some light vehicles, in which were carried some provisions and the tools, &c., necessary for the destruction of railways, roads, and improvised earthworks or obstacles.

His raids were prepared in much the same way as Morgan's—viz. by sending out scouts a week or so in advance into the territory through or into which he meant to advance. These men obtained for him all necessary information.

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His men were armed with a sabre attached to the saddle, a revolver, and a carbine. He generally marched all day at the walk and the trot, with the exception of a couple of hours at noon, and halted all night. He encamped generally without any tents, and the arrangements of the bivouac were of the most simple description. In the neighbourhood of the enemy each man lay down to rest with his horse's bridle over his arm. When the force was in comparative security he tied his horse to the most convenient tree and slept by his side.

The distances he covered were generally from 40 to 45 miles a day and on a single route. For the security of his column he adopted the usual precautions of flankers and advanced guards, but what he most relied upon were his companies of scouts which preceded his march, keeping always some 24 hours in advance of him. These two companies, which were composed solely of men belonging to the country in which he operated, covered as much ground as possible, and constantly sent him all the information he required.

In the course of the more extended and distant raids which were made by Forrest his men constantly changed any horses which were worn out and fatigued for fresh ones which they found *en route*, and of suitable animals there was generally found a good supply. It was indeed rather the exception when any one horse lasted more than 3 or 4 days.

In order not to encumber the line of march it was an invariable rule that no officer or man should take with him more than one horse on the march.

Forrest's ordinary tactics were to leave his advance guard engaged with the enemy, and then by making a wide detour as quickly as possible to throw himself with all the rest of his available strength upon the enemy's flank.

When he attacked cavalry h s 1st regiment sustained the fight for a certain time, and then made a feigned retreat in order to draw on the enemy and to encourage him to follow up his supposed success. The latter was then frequently drawn on till he was assailed at point-blank range by the

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rifles of the 2nd regiment, who had dismounted during the engagement and placed themselves in ambush on both sides of the road, as the case might be.

With regard to artillery, Forrest had 2 light guns for each brigade.

These guns formed an integral part of his force, and always maintained the same pace under all circumstances as the rest of the column, and no special escort was told off for their protection. At the moment of an attack, which was generally made on foot, they came into action at once without moving further than was absolutely needful from the spot where they happened to be. They were used when necessary in the most exposed situations, for Forrest was never hampered by apprehensions that his guns might be taken. If they were taken, his men had to retake them.

For the destruction of railways the following methods were adopted by Forrest's men. The railways were covered along a sufficient length of the line with thick brushwood, which was then set on fire.

The heat made the rails bend and warp and deranged the fastenings which held them to the sleepers; then with the aid of tools, which they carried with them on their light vehicles, they easily contrived still further to render them quite useless. Half an hour was generally sufficient for 1,000 men to destroy a mile's length of railway.

Leaving aside the irregular corps of Forrest and Morgan, let us pass on to another noted leader of Confederate horse—viz. Stuart, and see how he worked with his more regular and better appointed corps.

The difference between him and leaders like Forrest and Morgan was that Stuart had been an officer of the regular United States army, and the cavalry he led were organised and equipped after the European pattern, and acted, at any rate at first, like regular cavalry. Morgan and Forrest, on the other hand, had had no military education whatever, and were veritable guerilla or partisan leaders, and the troops they commanded were in reality nothing but mounted infantry.

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Stuart, moreover, never held an entirely independent command, but always acted in conjunction with the Confederate army, of which his troops formed a part. As has been already shown, he rendered the most signal service to the Confederate cause. His troops did not generally campaign in the very rough and ready fashion of Morgan's and Forrest's men.

They were furnished with tents on their expeditions; were well provisioned, and accompanied by transport vehicles. They were armed with sabres and revolvers, and very few of them, at first at any rate, had any carbines.

The reconnaissances made by Stuart were carried out with extraordinary skill, and the information he obtained regarding the enemy was wonderfully accurate. He effected these operations with a comparatively small force—that is, with about 1,500 or 2,000 men.

When he made the complete circuit of McClellan's army in June 1862 he had with him 2,500 men and 2 light guns. The total strength, however, of the force under his command rose in 1863 to 12,000 men and 24 guns.

With regard to the Federal cavalry, the more noted of its leaders were Grierson, Stoneman, Wilson, and Sheridan.

The first successful raid made by the Northern cavalry was that of Grierson, in 1863. Stoneman's famous raid soon followed, and later on, in 1865, General Wilson organised with the greatest care a numerous cavalry corps, which was to be used as an invading army, and was equipped so as to be able to keep the field for 60 days without being dependent for provisions, ammunition, and stores upon the head-quarters' magazines.

When Wilson started on his raid in Alabama he took with him some 12,000 mounted men. They took with them no change of clothing, but each man carried with him 5 days' provisions, 24 lbs. of corn, 100 cartridges, and one set of spare shoes. The remaining provisions and stores were carried (enough for 60 days in all) on mules and in a transport train of 250 vehicles.

As was invariably the case both with Federal and with

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Confederate leaders, Wilson's march was preceded by scouts, who went far ahead of their own army.[1] His 12,500 horsemen marched on 4 or 5 parallel roads, and the usual precautions were adopted for the safety of the different columns while on the march and at the halt.

Ordinarily the pace at which Wilson's corps marched was the walk, and the average length of march was from 20 to 30 miles a day.

I now pass on to the operations of General Sheridan, who, by the tactics he employed, brought about the final overthrow of the Confederates. Sheridan had in his pay some 60 special spies. These men, some of whom were dressed as Confederate soldiers, used to penetrate into the enemy's lines, and, if necessary, to remain there, in order to transmit all useful information to their chief. These scouts, or rather spies, were paid in accordance with the importance of the information they brought or sent.

In spite of these valuable auxiliaries, Sheridan was forced, in consequence of the hostility of the population of the districts through which he marched, to exercise the greatest caution and secrecy as to his movements and intentions, &c. &c.

The 10,000 horsemen under his command were armed with the sabre, which was generally attached to the saddle. They had, moreover, the Spencer magazine rifle and the revolver. They only fought on horseback against cavalry, and then charged sword in hand. As a general rule, however, the Confederate horsemen did not wait mounted to meet them, but hastened to dismount and to get under cover, and then they received the Federal horsemen with a musketry fire. When they had no time to execute this manœuvre they made use of their revolvers, and the Federals are said

[1] It may here be observed that the scouts of the Federal forces had, generally speaking, a far more difficult task to perform than their opponents, the Confederates. The latter generally, in their raids, passed through countries where the inhabitants were well disposed, and therefore gave them every information in their power. The Federals, on the other hand, generally found the population entirely hostile to them

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to have often found to their cost in these engagements that the sabre was far less deadly than these fire-arms.

Whenever Sheridan had to deal with infantry, or whenever he had to take the offensive, his men dismounted. Each horse-holder held from 4 to 8 horses, and thus a very large proportion of this large mounted body instantly became a formidable infantry, which was able, by means of its repeating fire-arms, at any given moment to bring a most effective fire to bear upon the enemy, and, owing to their revolvers, it was almost impossible for their foes to come to close quarters with them.

With regard to Sheridan's method of fighting, his troops generally formed three lines, as follows :—

Firstly, the skirmishers, who first engaged the enemy.

Secondly, the supports formed by the regiments in attacking columns.

Thirdly, the reserve, which was generally composed of a whole division.

The whole of Sheridan's mounted force generally marched in one route, and in columns of 4 abreast,[1] as he considered that when his troops marched in several parallel routes it was hardly ever possible to bring them together so as to have them at hand when wanted.

Three regiments formed the advanced guard, 1 at a little distance from the column, and in the same route, the other 2 being spread across country or in parallel routes to the right or the left at a distance of from 1 to 2 miles. Each of these regiments maintained communication with the main body by means of men placed at intervals of 200 yards or so, and they were preceded by scouts, spread out in the shape of a fan, from 1 to 2 miles in advance. When he came to a cross road 2 squadrons were sent, some little distance apart, to the right and left, and formed a flanking guard, till all the column had passed. Meanwhile the 60 spies, of whom

[1] The length of a cavalry column of 10,000 men, in a column of 4 abreast, would, at the ordinary calculation of a yard per man, and allowing for intervals and loss of distance, be at least seven to eight miles.

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mention has already been made, kept continually on the move round the head of this long column. These precautions were rendered necessary by the bold audacity of the Southern cavalry, who did not hesitate, even when inferior in numbers, to undertake a flank attack whenever an opportunity presented itself of so doing.

The ordinary length of each day's march, which was always done at the walk, did not exceed 16 or 17 miles a day, though sometimes far longer marches than this were made.

The transport carts hardly carried anything except ammunition.

Each man carried on his horse 4 days' rations, 2 days' oats, his tent, his cloak, and his blanket, but no change of clothes.

The men nearly always encamped every day on arriving at the camping ground. The three regiments who formed the advanced guard established themselves in good defensive positions, and made their dispositions for resisting on foot any attack made by the enemy. The horses remained saddled and vedettes covered the front. In addition to this, every two hours or so patrols of from 15 to 20 men, led by enterprising officers, went out far ahead to scout, leaving behind them at stated distances relays of men to carry back, in case of necessity, any important news to the camp.

At first Sheridan had with him a large force of artillery, but, finding that its presence greatly hampered the mobility of his column, he gradually reduced the number of his guns to such an extent that he finally had only 1 battery instead of the 4 which he at first took with him. In his Shenandoah raid he hardly made use of any artillery at all.

Sheridan is credited with having been the first general who employed his cavalry as mounted infantry in the true sense of the word—i.e. as troops which combined firmness and solidity in fighting with the capability of being carried rapidly from one point to another.

The conclusions which may be drawn from the particulars which have here been given regarding the more noted of these American raids may be summed up as follows:

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The boldest and most rapid raids were generally made by bodies of horse not exceeding 2,000 men or so, and the cavalry which made the longest marches in the 24 hours was that of Morgan, whose general rate of march was the walk.

Both the Federal and the Confederate cavalry in the course of their operations marched as concentrated as possible, in order to be at the disposal of their chief as soon as they were wanted.

Horses were never changed systematically during a raid, but at any time when any horse was done up his rider replaced him by a fresh one as soon as he could pick one up on the march. This was done more freely by the Confederate horsemen than by the Federals, and goes far to explain the length and rapidity of the marches which the American cavalry managed to make.

Artillery scarcely played any very prominent or definite part in the raids. All the chiefs who led these expeditions progressively diminished the number of the guns which were originally deemed to be necessary, in order not to hamper the mobility of the main body.

In the principal and most famous of these expeditions it was the scouts who most contributed to the successes which were obtained. These scouts, who were nearly all young men, well educated, and intelligent, were often better informed about everything which concerned the enemy's forces than the generals of those forces themselves. When operating in a country which was hostile to them their task was naturally a far more difficult one, but, owing to their experience and a special aptitude which they developed, they carried out their most difficult duties with a skill to which ordinary soldiers would never have attained.

Leaving the American Civil War, let us pass on to subsequent European campaigns.

From the campaign of 1866—i.e. 'the 6 weeks' war'—between Prussia and Austria, there is nothing to be learnt regarding cavalry raids, inasmuch as neither side had yet learnt to utilise its cavalry in this fashion. In fact, on both sides the cavalry in this campaign were singularly un-

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enterprising and attempted no operations of this kind worth mentioning. 'When the hostile cavalry met, when they did engage, no doubt they were well drilled, manœuvred steadily, and fought on both sides with the greatest gallantry; but can the reader compare the services of the horsemen on both sides with those performed in the United States without admitting that the services rendered and the results gained by the mounted riflemen in America were not infinitely greater than those of the horsemen in Bohemia in 1866? Nor can anyone doubt that the American system was more suited to the modern projectile weapons.'[1] Doubtless, the lack of dash and enterprise which characterised the Prussian and Austrian cavalry must be attributed, to a great degree, to the short duration of the campaign, and it may reasonably be supposed that if it had continued somewhat longer, these qualities would have been soon developed and displayed on both sides.

Similarly in the Franco-German campaign, though the services rendered by the German cavalry to its own army gained for it, as is well known, great renown, no far-reaching cavalry raids on a large scale, as practised by the Americans in their Civil War, were attempted to be carried out. Minor operations of this kind, of course, took place during the campaign. The following extracts of an order issued by Prince Frederick Charles to the 2nd German Army will serve as a specimen of the tasks which occasionally devolved upon the cavalry :—

'*Field-Marshal Prince Frederick Charles, commanding the 2nd German Army, to General von Manstein, commanding the 9th Corps d'Armée.*'

'Nemours: November 18, 1870.

'Above all, it is important to have more detailed information concerning the position of the enemy to the north of Orleans, especially as to the strength and composition of his army, the extent of his front, and where his right begins, and his left ends.

[1] Denison's *History of Cavalry*, p. 491.

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'The General commanding the 1st and 2nd divisions of cavalry will push forward their explorations, especially round the 2 flanks of the enemy, in order to obtain information upon the points mentioned above, and with this object they will endeavour to make as many prisoners as possible. Your Excellency will be good enough till further orders to send each day at noon to my head-quarters an officer to bring me the latest news concerning the enemy, and all that may have taken place on your right flank.'

Another example of the duties which the German cavalry intended to carry out may be seen from another general order issued a short time subsequently to the one which has just been detailed by the same commander (Prince Frederick Charles) :—

'Orleans: December 6, 1870.

'The 6th cavalry division is instructed to go by forced marches to Vierzon, and there entirely to destroy the three following lines of rail, viz. :—

'I. From Vierzon to Bourges.
'II. From Vierzon to Châteauroux.
'III. From Vierzon to Tours.

'The 10th Corps will furnish the cavalry division with a strong detachment of engineers provided with blasting powder, so that the destruction of these lines may be simultaneous.

'I leave to the commander of the 6th cavalry division the task of making the necessary dispositions for carrying out this order, but I shall count upon these railways being put *hors de service* by the 8th instant. In addition to this it will be the task of the 6th division to inform me of the line of retreat followed by the enemy's troops by Ferté-St.-Aubin. Communications will be kept up with my head-quarters by means of relays of orderlies.'

It will be observed that the first of the orders here quoted gives general instructions as to the task of the cavalry referred to. In the last quoted extract it will be seen that a definite task is directed to be carried out.

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The next war with which we have to deal is the Russo-Turkish campaign of 1877–8. As has been remarked in a former chapter, the Russian cavalry was deficient in capable commanders, and consequently in the course of the campaign let slip several notable opportunities of rendering signal services to its own side. There was, however, one notable raid or expedition during the campaign in which the Russian cavalry took a leading and conspicuous part. I refer, of course, to General Gourko's first expedition or raid across the Balkans. Of this exploit it will be as well to give a somewhat detailed account, as in it the Russian cavalry rendered good service.

On June 30, 1877, a few days after the Russian army had crossed the Danube at Sistova, orders were given by the Grand Duke Nicholas for the formation of a detachment under the orders of General Gourko, 'which was directed to push forward rapidly to Tirnova and Selvi, reconnoitre the surrounding country, and be prepared upon the receipt of subsequent orders to gain possession of a pass in the Balkans by which the army could cross, at the same time sending his cavalry south of the mountains to cut the railroads and telegraphs and to do whatever other damage they could.'[1]

This detachment consisted in all of 10½ battalions of infantry (8,000 men), 31½ squadrons of cavalry (4,000 men), and 32 guns.

This detachment crossed the Sistova bridge on July 3, and began its march southwards. On the 6th it arrived, without meeting any opposition *en route*, in the villages just north of the Tirnova-Selvi main road. From here, in order to make a reconnaissance of Tirnova, and to ascertain whether it was strongly held or not, General Gourko took forward on the 7th his brigade of cavalry, consisting of the 8th and 9th Regiments of Dragoons and 16th Horse Battery, with which he approached the town from the west, over the heights of Kajabunah. He soon managed to ascertain that

[1] See the *Russian Campaigns in Turkey*, 1877–78, by Lieut. F. V. Greene, U.S. Army. The following account of General Gourko's first passage of the Balkans is taken from his account.

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the Turks were in no great force; he therefore descended from the heights, and advanced with his whole brigade upon the town. The Turks, whose strength consisted of 5 battalions of infantry (3,000 men), 400 irregular cavalry, and 6 guns, retreated before him, and crossed to the other side of the river Yantra, just above the town, where they took up a position commanding the approach to the road. Hereupon Gourko sent a detachment of his cavalry (Cossacks) through the town (on his left and front), with orders to cross the river and threaten the enemy's rear. Meanwhile he advanced with the dragoons directly against the enemy in front of him. The Turks, after making merely a show of resistance, abandoned everything and retreated hastily to Osman Bazar. The force with which Gourko converted his reconnaissance into an attack was about 1,400 cavalry and 6 guns. The rest of Gourko's troops came to Tirnova the next day (July 8), and remained there till the 12th. Acting upon the information which he was able to obtain at Tirnova regarding the passes over the Balkans, Gourko drew up the following plan, which was approved by the Grand Duke Nicholas:—

'To cross the Balkans with the whole of his detachment except 1 regiment of Cossacks (No. 30) and 2 guns by a blind trail about half way between Elena and Travna passes, first sending his pioneers ahead to make the trail passable for his light artillery if possible.

'The 30th Regiment of Cossacks to leave 4 squadrons at Tirnova, and send the other 2 squadrons and 2 guns to Gabrova, to watch the northern outlet of the Shipka Pass. A small detachment of Cossacks at the moment of starting was to reconnoitre the Elena Pass, and be sure at the last moment there were no Turks there.

'To leave at Tirnova all the baggage on wheels, and take nothing with the troops but pack-animals, which should carry 5 days' hard bread and 3 days' forage; but the men and horses were to live on the country as much as possible, and keep their regular rations and forage till absolutely required.

'On issuing from the mountains on the south, Gourko

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would at once proceed to Kazanlik, and attack the Shipka Pass from the south, while the Cossacks of the 30th Regiment should make a demonstration against this pass from the north. This to take place on July 17.'[1]

This plan having been approved by the Grand Duke Nicholas, the pioneers were sent forward on July 10 to clear the road, and the detachment started on the 12th. On the evening of the 13th he crossed the summit, and bivouacked on the southern slope. He continued his march with little or no opposition till the 14th, when he surprised the Turkish garrison of Hiankioi, which hastily withdrew without offering any opposition to his march. The difficulties of the ascent, however, were not slight either for artillery or cavalry, and are thus described by Lieutenant Greene: 'The ascent of the mountain began at the village of Parovchi, at an elevation of about 1,800 feet, and in the next 8 miles the road ascended 1,900 feet, crossing the summit at an elevation of 3,700 feet. On the southern slope, in 12 miles the road descended 2,300 feet, the elevation of Hiankioi being about 1,400 feet. Over the greater part of the mountain to Hiankioi the guns were dragged by the infantry, the grades being much too steep for the horses to be of any use.'

On the 15th Gourko remained at Hiankioi, collecting his troops who had not passed through the defile on the previous day. He sent out, however, 3 squadrons of Cossacks in the direction of Yeni-Zagra, in order to cut the telegraph wires. This body met with some opposition on its march, as it was opposed by three battalions of Turkish infantry. Hereupon the 9th Dragoons were sent to reinforce it, and the Turks retreated in disorder. The Russian cavalry returned to Hiankioi that night without having effected the object of its mission.

On July 16 Gourko left Hiankioi, and began his march towards Shipka, intending to reach the neighbourhood of Kazanlik, 20 miles, that afternoon. He took with him 5,000 infantry, 3,000 cavalry, and 16 guns, leaving the balance of his force at Hiankioi. During his march on this day his

[1] For these operations see Map III.

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troops had a sharp fight with the Turks, in which they lost 2 officers and 60 men. This affair occupied so much time that Gourko could go no further that day than Maglis, 10 miles east of Kazanlyk.

The next morning, at daybreak, Gourko moved out with his troops in 3 columns to attack the Turkish force, which had taken up a position 5 miles in front of Kazanlyk, in order to defend the town. Their strength, however, was much inferior to that of the Russians.

'The fight began at 7 o'clock in the morning, but it was a small affair, although it lasted for 2 or 3 hours. The cavalry turned the right flank of the Turks, who thereupon began to retreat upon Kazanlyk ; the cavalry, still outflanking them, cut off their retreat from Karlova, and turned them towards Shipka, and then converted their retreat into a rout, in which they lost 400 prisoners and their 3 guns. The Russian loss was 19 men. The village of Kazanlyk was in possession of the Russians by noon, and Gourko wished to march directly on to Shipka and attack the pass, but his men were so exhausted (the heat was very great) that he was obliged to give them several hours' rest. Meanwhile with the cavalry he went on in person to Shipka village, where the infantry rejoined him about sunset. It was then too late to attack.' Gourko, however, who was in ignorance that an attack had, as previously arranged, been made on that day from the northern side on the Turkish position in the Shipka Pass, made his preparations to attack the next morning. He sent word of his intention across the mountain to the northern side, and requested Prince Mirsky to create a diversion by making a simultaneous attack. His messenger, however, unfortunately did not arrive at his destination till noon on the 18th, and then it was too late, as in the meantime Gourko had delivered his attack, which was isolated and unsuccessful, just as had been the one from the northern side upon the previous day.

On the morning of the next day, however (July 19), when both Gourko and the Russian detachment on the north were preparing to renew the attack, the Turks evacuated

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their positions and dispersed by small bands through the mountains to the west.

'On July 19, therefore, the Shipka Pass was in the hands of the Russians, and the principal objects of Gourko's expedition were accomplished. In 8 days from the time of leaving Tirnova, and 16 days from the Danube, he had gained possession of 3 passes (Hiankioi, Travna, and Shipka), covering a length of 30 miles in the Balkans, and one of them the great high road from Bulgaria to Roumelia; he had dispersed various detachments, numbering in all about 10,000 men, had captured 11 guns and a large quantity of ammunition, clothing, and provisions, and had disarmed the Turkish population throughout a large part of the valley of the Tundja, and all with a loss of less than 500 men. His men and horses had lived off the country and what they captured from the Turks, and on the 19th they still had 3 days' rations of hard bread (out of the 5 which they had taken with them) untouched.

From July 19 to 22 Gourko's detachment rested at Shipka and Kazanlyk. On the latter date the town of Eski-Zagra was occupied by the 9th Dragoons, 1 squadron of Cossacks, and 2 guns. This town was obviously of the greatest importance to the Russians, as it covered their retreat to Kazanlyk and the Shipka Pass. Having secured this point, on the 23rd Gourko began to resume the offensive, and sent out raiding parties as follows:—

(1) A detachment consisting of the 8th Dragoons, 2 squadrons of the 21st Don Cossacks, and 2 horse artillery guns, was ordered 'to proceed by Eski-Zagra to the station Karabuna on the Yamboli railroad, to destroy the railroad and telegraph near this point, and to gather as much information as possible about the movements of the Turks. This detachment bivouacked for the night at Eski-Zagra, and early the next morning, July 24, moved forward in 3 parties, one of which was to strike the railroad above Karabuna, the other below it, while the third as a reserve moved directly upon that point. The first party reached the road and destroyed it, the other two were held in check by a Turkish

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detachment of 3 or 4 battalions and several hundred Circassians, which they met before arriving at Karabuna. After skirmishing all day the 3 parties withdrew, and the united detachments retired to Eski-Zagra at night, having destroyed 5 bridges, 3 culverts, several railway stations, and the track and the telegraph on a length of several miles.'

(2) A detachment was sent out consisting of the 9th Dragoons, 1 squadron of Don Cossacks, and 2 horse artillery guns, which was to endeavour to reach the station of Kaiadzek on the Philippopolis railroad, and to destroy the line in that vicinity and gather what information it could about the movements of the enemy.

This party, in spite of the resistance offered by some irregular Turkish troops *en route*, succeeded in reaching the station of Kaiadzek, which they destroyed, as well as the track and telegraph line for some distance.

'These two detachments, besides destroying the track and telegraph both on the Yamboli and Philippopolis lines, gathered the following information about the Turks—viz. that there were near Karabuna, on the Yamboli railroad, from 4 to 6 battalions and some cavalry; that troops were beginning to concentrate near the junction of the railroads; and that they were being brought there by rail from Adrianople. The same day, by a small reconnaissance in the direction of Yeni-Zagra, it was learned that there were Turkish troops at that place, but it could not be discovered in what strength.

'Upon these data Gourko divided his detachment into 2 portions on July 26th, one of which, composed of the Bulgarian legion (6 battalions), the 2 regiments of Dragoons, the 9th Hussars, 3 sotnias of Cossacks (in all 15 squadrons), and 12 guns, he sent to Eski-Zagra under the orders of Duke Nicholas Leuchtenberg; with the other (4th Rifle Brigade, 6 to 8 sotnias of Cossacks, and 22 guns) Gourko proceeded on the 27th eastward along the Tundja, with the intention of crossing the Little Balkans to Yeni-Zagra.

'Leuchtenberg's detachment established itself at Eski-Zagra on July 25th, with outposts about 10 miles out on the

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roads leading east, south, and west, and on the succeeding days continued to send reconnaissances towards Yeni-Zagra and towards the junction of the railroads. At this latter point the Turkish troops continued to arrive every day by trains, but they had not yet advanced beyond Karabuna, where they had about 7 or 8 battalions. At Yeni-Zagra was a somewhat larger force.'

It will be unnecessary for the purposes of this chapter to recount in detail the events of the next few following days. It will be well known to most of my readers that Gourko soon found himself so hardly pressed by the far superior forces which Suleiman Pasha now brought against him that it at once became evident that it would be necessary to retreat. Accordingly on the evening of July 31, after holding in check for two days with his detachment of 16,000 men the whole of Suleiman's forces, some 50,000 men in all, his main body crossed the Little Balkans, and reached the neighbourhood of Hiankioi.

During the fighting on July 30 and 31, and also during the subsequent retreat, the Russian cavalry did very good service. When, on July 30, Leuchtenberg found it necessary to fall back with his detachment on Eski-Zagra, his cavalry (8th and 9th Dragoons, 9th Hussars, 3 squadrons of Cossacks, in all 15 squadrons and 12 guns) checked for a long time the advance of, and held their own against, a very superior force of Turkish infantry. Finally, moreover, the cavalry successfully covered Gourko's retreat across the Balkans in the face of a force which outnumbered their own by three to one.

Regarding this expedition of Gourko's, Lieutenant Greene's comments are as follows :—

'This expedition of Gourko's was more than a mere cavalry raid ; it was an admirably conducted movement of an advanced guard composed of all arms. With 8,000 infantry, 4,000 cavalry, and 32 guns, it had in no less than a month gained possession of one of the principal passes of the Balkans, from which the Russians, though terribly attacked, never let go their hold, and which they finally used in

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January for the passage of a large portion of their army. It had carried a panic throughout the whole of Turkey between the Balkans and Constantinople, and its scouting parties had penetrated to within 70 miles of Adrianople, the second city of the empire, and had destroyed the railroad and telegraph on the two principal lines. Finally, it had gathered accurate information concerning the strength and positions of the large Turkish force advancing towards the Balkans.

'In this expedition alone of the campaign was the cavalry energetically handled. On several occasions it fought on foot; it was constantly on the move; it subsisted on the country. On July 29 and 30, 14 squadrons of it (1,800 men) held their own against 4,000 infantry and several hundred Bashibazouks and Tcherkesses, and it finally covered Gourko's retreat before a force more than three times superior to its own. The irregular cavalry of the Turks never waited long enough to come to hand-to-hand blows. On one occasion (July 16), while fighting on foot against infantry, the dragoons advanced with fixed bayonets, but the Turks retired without accepting a hand-to-hand struggle.'

Gourko's second expedition across the Balkans, in the winter of 1877–78, was in no sense a cavalry operation, and the Russian cavalry who accompanied the different columns had on this occasion no great opportunity of rendering any signal services to its own side. Indeed, the mere difficulties and privations of their arduous march alone were such as to tax the strength and endurance of the men and horses to the utmost. An account of this notable operation need not here be given.

Our campaigns in Afghanistan furnished no examples of cavalry raids, as neither the country nor the conditions of the campaign appear to have afforded any scope for operations of this kind. In the Zulu campaigns it was thought by many officers on the spot that there were on several occasions tempting opportunities for the energetic action of cavalry; but, if so, it is certain that no advantage was taken of them. These campaigns, therefore, require no further comments in this chapter.

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Passing on to the year 1882, the great event of the Egyptian campaign, as far as the cavalry was concerned, was, it need hardly be said, the advance upon Cairo after the victory of Tel-el-Kebir, the capture of that city by the cavalry division, and its occupation till the infantry came up, which ended the campaign at a stroke. This rapid advance of more than 50 miles ahead of the infantry and capture by a *coup de main* of a hostile capital containing some 350,000 inhabitants, and garrisoned by more than 10,000 regular troops of all arms, was a bold exploit, which may vie in its results with anything which cavalry has achieved by prompt and rapid action in any modern campaign.

A brief account of this exploit may be given as follows:—

At the battle of Tel-el-Kebir the 2nd or Indian cavalry brigade, consisting of the 2nd and 6th Bengal Cavalry and 13th Bengal Lancers, formed the 1st line, under Brigadier-General Wilkinson. The 1st, or Heavy cavalry brigade, consisting of the 2nd and 7th Dragoon Guards and the Household Cavalry, under Brigadier-General Sir Baker Russell, formed the 2nd line. The whole division was, as is well known, under the command of Major-General Sir Drury Lowe.

On September 13, 1882, immediately after the action, the Indian cavalry brigade was pushed forward, with orders to seize the Lock gates at Abbassa, some 2 or 3 miles above Tel-el-Kebir.[1] When this had been done the brigade, after a halt of about half an hour at the Lock, under the command of Brigadier-General Wilkinson, started for Belbeis, some 16 miles distant. The route taken was by the north side of the Fresh Water Canal. After some desultory skirmishing with some of the fugitives, who were overtaken and dispersed *en route*, Belbeis was reached by the Indian cavalry about noon. A few hours afterwards General Sir Drury Lowe and his staff marched into Belbeis, followed at a short interval by the 4th Dragoon Guards, who had marched from Tel-el-Kebir. Unluckily, the horse artillery attached to the brigade had been unable to keep up with the cavalry, and had to be

[1] See Map VII.

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left behind with an escort, in the hope that it would be able to reach Belbeis in time to march on with the brigade next morning. This expectation, however, was not realised. In spite, however, of this mishap, which so seriously crippled at this important moment the efficiency of the force under his command, General Sir Drury Lowe determined to push on at once for Cairo. Accordingly, at 4.30 A.M. the next morning (September 14), taking with him only 7 troops of the 4th Dragoon Guards, 6 of the 2nd Bengal Cavalry, 5 of the 13th Bengal Lancers, he started from Belbeis *en route* for the capital, taking the road by the south, or desert side of the canal. On reaching Siriakus Lock, some 12 miles from Cairo, this cavalry column diverged to its left, and, continuing its march with the desert on its left, reached the Abbasiyeh cantonment, some 3½ miles to the east of Cairo, towards sunset. Meanwhile General Wilkinson, with the 6th Bengal Cavalry, 1 troop of the 13th Bengal Lancers, and some mounted infantry, marched from Belbeis shortly after General Sir Drury Lowe; but, instead of diverging to the left at Siriakus, as the other column had done, he kept straight on along the Fresh Water Canal, reaching Cairo about sunset, and occupying the railway bridge over the Fresh Water Canal, near the Central railway station.

The moral effect of this bold advance of the cavalry was so great that, as is well known, more than 10,000 troops laid down their arms without firing a shot, and ere the dawn of the 15th the citadel and the city of Cairo, the railway and the telegraph, were all in General Sir Drury Lowe's hands.

The distances marched from Kassassin were approximately as follows, viz.:—

By the route from Kassassin round by the north of Tel-el-Kebir to Belbeis, about 22 miles.

From Belbeis to Cairo, about 36 miles.

In conclusion, it may be remarked that cavalry raids have never, except to a very small extent, been carried out in any of the later campaigns in Europe. The main reasons why they have not as a general rule been even practised in time of peace, like other operations of war, are

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twofold. In the first place, grave doubts are entertained by some authorities as to whether any great results are likely to be achieved by them in future European warfare. Secondly, in any civilised country the difficulties of practising such operations so as to give them any real resemblance to actual warfare are generally found to be almost insuperable. A notable exception to this is Russia. In that country, where things are done habitually in a far more arbitrary fashion than would be possible elsewhere, and where rights of property are made to give way to the military necessities of the moment, cavalry raids after the American pattern and sometimes on a large scale have always been a very favourite idea, and confident expectations are entertained that by using the dragoons and Cossacks as invading hordes great results will, in their next European campaign, be achieved. This being so, no pains or trouble are spared in order to render the Russian cavalry conversant with the tasks which, in its next European campaign, it will be called upon to carry out. Certainly in the capacity of both men and horses for making long and arduous marches on an emergency, often under very adverse circumstances, the Russian cavalry spares no efforts, and the distances which their cavalry regiments or detachments cover when practising raids during their annual summer manœuvres are often astonishing to read of.[1]

The following short sketch of two raids, which were amongst others made, during the summer of 1883 from the camp at Krasno Selo, may serve to give an idea of how these expeditions are practised.

Under instructions issued by the Grand Duke Nicholas, Inspector-General of Cavalry, 4 detachments, each consisting of 2 squadrons and 2 horse artillery guns, were sent out to Sablino, a station on the Nicholai railway, and another to Siwerskaya, a station on the Warsaw railway. The object in each case was to reconnoitre these points and to put them

[1] As a matter of fact, however, despite all that is said to the contrary, after these long raids many horses are often completely knocked up and useless for days! A notable instance of this occurred in Poland last autumn (1883) with two squadrons of Cossacks.

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in a state of defence. Two hours after they had started a detachment of similar strength was sent out after each of them with orders to attack the above-mentioned stations. All the detachments had to keep up an average pace of 7 versts (nearly 5 miles an hour). The men carried oats and rations with them. Hay and wood were bought *en route*. The attacks on the stations were repulsed, and on the following day the troops marched back to camp, practising *en route* with the most painstaking thoroughness and detail all precautions necessary for the safety of the column. The distances covered on the march out and back to camp were from 115 to 120 versts (75 to 80 miles), to which must be added at least 15 versts (10 miles) which were traversed in patrolling, flanking, and outpost duties. Both men and horses are said to have performed their work efficiently and returned to camp in satisfactory condition. The artillery in this respect was not a whit behind the cavalry.[1]

The practice of these raids is considered, and rightly so, to afford excellent instruction to cavalry and artillery officers of junior rank in minor operations of war.

[1] It must be borne in mind that for many of these raids, in which great distances are traversed, both men and horses are carefully picked, and often trained for weeks beforehand. It is clear that long marches performed by small cavalry detachments under these special conditions are no very real test of the endurance and capabilities of larger bodies under ordinary circumstances.

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CHAPTER XVI.

AN ADVANCED CAVALRY FORCE.

Enumeration of the duties of an advanced cavalry force—Their extent and variety—Complex nature of the task entrusted to the cavalry commander—The breadth of front to be covered by advanced cavalry force—Considerations which should guide a decision upon the point – Examples of extents of front covered by German cavalry in Franco-German war—Too great an extent of front to be avoided—Distance to be maintained by a cavalry force in advance of its own army—Proposed disposition of a force of three brigades—Scouting parties—Their task and duties—Necessity of separating the service of outposts from that of scouting—Opinions of German military writers on disposition of cavalry force—Place and distribution of horse artillery in the advance—How to deal with attempts of hostile cavalry to break the line of cavalry—Advisability of avoiding fighting as long as possible—Measures to be adopted in cantonments or bivouac—Preference to be given to billets rather than bivouac—Summary of main principles of action which should guide disposition of advanced cavalry force.

BEFORE proceeding to discuss in detail the topics which are briefly summarised in the heading of this chapter it will be as well first to pause and ask what is the general accepted view of the tasks and duties which in a modern campaign devolve upon the cavalry arm.

Leaving aside for the moment the action of cavalry upon the actual battle-field, it may be observed at the outset that the tasks and duties which the cavalry arm nowadays has to perform must vary so greatly in each particular case and depend upon so many conditions, both of a strategical and topographical nature, that it would be difficult adequately to

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describe them in concise and definite terms. In other words, it would scarcely be possible within the scope of a few lines to embrace and include the manifold duties which in a European campaign, especially in a highly civilised country, the cavalry of each side will be called upon to fulfil. But in general terms, and at somewhat greater length than a mere definition will admit of, the various tasks of the cavalry both at the beginning of and during a campaign may be summed up as follows :—

1. The general performance of outpost duties, thereby ensuring the safety and security of one's own army in rear.

2. The repulse of the enemy's cavalry at any point where it may endeavour to advance, so as to prevent it from gaining information as to the movements and intentions of one's own army in rear.

3. Exploration and reconnaissance of large tracts of country in front or on the flank of its own army, in order to find and keep touch of the enemy, and to obtain intelligence as to his strength, position, and probable intentions. This will of course often necessarily include driving back the enemy's cavalry in order to be able to see what he is doing in rear.

4. Covering the mobilisation of its own army in rear, and protecting railways and telegraph lines from raids of hostile cavalry.

5. Hindering and checking, where possible, the mobilisation of isolated portions of the enemy's army.

6. Anticipating the enemy in gaining possession of special positions, such as roads, passes, bridges, defiles, railway stations, postal and telegraph offices, the possession or destruction of which is likely to prove advantageous to one's own side, or available for the purpose of harassing the enemy or checking his advance.

A little reflection will show how varied and extensive are the duties which are included under the above general heads, and enable one to realise that a numerous and well-appointed cavalry is more than ever essential nowadays to the success and safety of an army in the field.

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Supposing that the above general *résumé* of the tasks and duties of cavalry in active service be accepted as correct, it is time to advance a step further and discuss the manner in which some of these tasks—viz. those which specially devolve upon a body of cavalry which has to cover the advance of an army—should be carried out, and the principles which should guide the disposition of such a force.

It is obvious that when a cavalry force has to explore as well as to ensure the security of a zone of country which may extend from 10, 15, or to 20 miles or even more in breadth of front, the commander of it, if he is successfully to fulfil the duties entrusted to him, must in each case conduct his operations upon some well-considered and definite plan. For what is the work which the cavalry force has to do? Briefly expressed, and omitting minor details, its task is this. Firstly, it has to find out what the enemy is doing or intending to do; and, secondly, it has to prevent the enemy from finding out what one's own side is doing or intending to do. In order to accomplish the first object, it is necessary that the cavalry force should be extended on as wide a front as possible; in order to accomplish the second, it must be so disposed as to be able rapidly to concentrate and fight. Thus it will be seen that the task of the force is not only a double one, but that the conditions of the two main objects it has in view are directly opposed to each other, inasmuch as the means which would naturally be taken to ensure the feasibility of the first of these objects render the second one doubly difficult to carry out.

As this whole subject, owing to its great importance, has been during recent years amply dealt with by well-known military writers, it is only natural that as a result of the discussion it has undergone, and of the experience which has been gained, both in peace manœuvres and on actual service, certain general principles should have been prescribed and laid down as those which are best and safest to carry out and adopt. An endeavour will therefore here be made to embody and explain these principles, and to present them in a practicable and instructive shape.

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One of the first points to be considered in dealing with this subject is the breadth of front which should be covered by a cavalry force. It would clearly be impossible to lay down any precise and unvarying rule upon this point, inasmuch as the extent of ground which a cavalry force, be it division, brigade, or regiment, with its reconnoitres, can cover, would naturally depend on many conditions, which would probably differ in nearly every case. The nature and conformation of the country, its practicability or otherwise for cavalry to move over it without reference to roads; the number of lateral and parallel roads; the power of the cavalry commander to transmit intelligence rapidly to the head-quarters of his army in the rear; the possibility of being able to concentrate the force in a reasonable time;—all these points would have to be taken into account. Thus, for example, when the country which is the theatre of operations is open and practicable for cavalry, and when there is no reason to apprehend the immediate proximity of large bodies of the enemy, a division of 6 regiments might safely be given a front of from 20 to 25 miles to cover. On the other hand, in a case where the country is wooded and much enclosed, the squadrons and scouting parties would necessarily have to work so much closer together and more cautiously (in order not to let any ground which might conceal an enemy escape their scrutiny), that not more than half or two-thirds of the above-named breadth of front could be efficiently covered by such a force.

When the 1st and 2nd German armies advanced from the Saar to the Moselle, in 1870, the cavalry force employed in the advance of the general front consisted on the first day of 10 regiments, and the breadth of front which they reconnoitred was nearly 60 miles—viz. from Pont à Chaussy, on the right, to Pfalzbourg, on the left. In this case each regiment had to cover about 6 miles of front. 'On the second day's march the same force continued this duty, again pushing forward from 15 to 20 miles in advance. The front reconnoitred was again about 60 miles along the general line,

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Pange-Nomeny-Saarbourg, still giving one regiment to about every 6 miles.

'On the third day the parties on the right came in contact with the enemy at all points on pushing forward about 20 miles to the front. On the left they reached the Moselle about 30 miles in advance of that wing. On this flank 6 regiments reconnoitred the ground between Magny and Nancy, a front of about 30 miles, giving one regiment to every 5 miles.'[1]

Though this is only an isolated instance of a cavalry march, it is quoted here to give some idea of the breadth of country which has been covered and protected by a strong advanced cavalry force in a modern campaign. It is obvious, however, that such wide breadths of front as have just been quoted in the above extract could only be covered by a cavalry force when little or no opposition to its advance was made by the enemy. Without laying down any very hard and fast rule, it may, perhaps, with safety be said that in a tolerably open country a cavalry regiment may be expected to cover a breadth of some 5 to 7 miles, and that in a close and enclosed country it would be safer to assign to it a breadth of front of not more than two-thirds or so of that distance.

It may here be remarked that nothing is to be more avoided than a too great breadth of front, and a too minute dispersion into small groups of the available force. The commander of a brigade or division who seeks to be everywhere will virtually be nowhere, and when cavalry is frittered away and subdivided into small groups *ad infinitum* squadrons are no longer squadrons, regiments are no longer regiments, and brigades are no longer brigades. If the extent and depth of the country which his force occupies is too large for its effective strength, and it has been frittered away in small groups over a wide extent, it will seldom be possible to reform them in time to be of use should the enemy make a determined attempt to break through the lines, and the risks which are run will not be compensated

[1] *Minor Tactics*, by Col. Clery, p. 43.

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by any real advantages. Nor should the mistake be made of sending out isolated parties which are too strong if they are only intended for transmission of intelligence, and too weak if they are meant for resistance or to take an offensive part.

The next point to consider is the distance that an advanced cavalry force should maintain from its own army. This, again, will in each case be generally dependent upon many considerations of the same kind as those which have just been mentioned as likely to determine the proper breadth of front. In the account just quoted of the advance of the German cavalry from the Saar to the Moselle, the distance which the cavalry maintained from its own army in rear was from 15 to 20 miles. In some cases the distance would, perhaps, be greater. As a rule it may, perhaps, be said that it would vary from 1 to 2 days' march.

Having dealt with these two preliminary points, let it be supposed that a cavalry force—such, for instance, as a division organised upon the German model (i.e. of 3 brigades of 2 regiments each)—is to cover the advance of an army; that the front to be covered by it is from 18 to 20 miles; and that the theatre of operations is a fairly open country well provided with parallel and lateral roads.

In such a case it would probably be advisable to hold one, or at most two, of the principal arteries of communication which run more or less at right angles to this front, and the disposition of the cavalry brigade should be somewhat as follows :—

Two brigades might be in advance, marching by parallel roads ; each brigade keeps one regiment in 1st line. These two regiments should cover between them the whole breadth of front which has been assigned to the division—say from 12 to 20 miles. Each of these regiments should keep, according to the nature of the country, one or two squadrons in advance. These advanced squadrons form their own advanced guards, and keep up constant communication with their own regiments—i.e. with what remains of them after these advanced squadrons have been sent forward—and with their

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own brigades in rear, and also lateral communication with each other.

The 2nd regiment of each of the 2 advanced brigades follows the 1st regiment in compact order between 2 or 3 miles in rear of the centre of it, or as near the centre of it as possible.

In rear of this 2nd line, at a distance of about 3, 4, or 5 miles, according as the circumstances of the case may demand, the 3rd brigade will follow as a reserve or 3rd line.

A battery of horse artillery is generally attached to each of these brigades.[1]

It will be seen that such a formation as this is as compact as it is possible for a cavalry force operating in this manner to be; that it does not consist of too many successive lines, and that hence it can easily be understood both on paper and also in practical operation in the field. It need hardly be remarked that, as a matter of course, modifications and alterations would be required according to circumstances, such as the extent of front to be covered, the general nature and conformation of the ground, &c. &c.

It may here be useful to remark that in making dispositions for the advance of a much smaller force, such as a brigade or regiment, either as an exercise at manœuvres or in actual warfare, the same principle and plan as is here given may safely be applied.

Scouting patrols of greater or less strength as may be required are generally detached either from the advanced squadrons already referred to or, if the latter cannot spare men for this purpose, from the leading regiment of the brigade. These patrols are pushed forward ahead of the advanced squadrons to as great a distance as the nature of the country, the real or supposed proximity or otherwise of the enemy, may seem to demand.

These scouting patrols, in addition to keeping well ahead of the advanced squadrons, should search the country to the right and left front of the zone of country intended to be

[1] For diagram of this formation see Plate II.

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covered by the division on the march. These patrols, whose duty it is to get the touch of the enemy, should be relieved from any direct obligation of providing for the security of the division on the march. If circumstances required an addition to these scouts, small, well-mounted parties, consisting of an officer and from 3 to 6 men or so, may be pushed very far ahead, either upon some special errand or to gather what information they can. These parties, like the scouting patrols just referred to, may often be granted great freedom for reconnoitring purposes; they should be free from any obligation to act on the defensive, and in case of failure or having to retreat suddenly it may often be advisable for them to be quite independent of the movements of the main body. To endeavour to rally them every day on the advanced guard or any other support thrown forward in advance is a task which will often be impossible, unless one wishes to run the risk of seeing them lose all trace of the enemy or let go the touch which they have already established with him.

In order to seize post-offices, letters, telegrams, and the local newspapers, and, in short, to obtain every information which, from a military point of view, may be of importance, it is necessary to act by surprise, and there is no better means of ensuring this great element of success than by sending forward officers with small parties far ahead of the advanced guard, who will suddenly appear at points where cavalry is not expected.

While on the subject of these scouting patrols it may be observed that the following point has been a good deal discussed upon the Continent during late years—viz. the necessity of entirely separating the service of outpost for watching over the safety of the army or main body from that of scouting and gaining intelligence. It has not unfrequently happened both on active service and at manœuvres that the difference between these two duties has not been sufficiently defined, and they have consequently been found to clash with each other. It will be well, therefore, to define clearly what the difference between these two services is.

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In order to be informed of the movements of the enemy, it is necessary constantly to be in contact with him. To protect one's self from surprise it is necessary to have outposts and detachments in advance of the main body; but these latter are not able to go far from the former, inasmuch as they may have to fall back upon it for protection. The result is, therefore, that if the enemy is at a certain distance the detachments charged with the duty of protecting the main body cannot remain in contact with him. As it often happens, moreover, that the opposing armies are several days' march distant from each other, it is necessary that the duties of scouting and gaining intelligence and those of insuring the safety of the army (*service de sécurité*) should be separated and intrusted to different troops.

Thus, while on the one hand those whose duty it is not to lose sight of the enemy are alone able to furnish continuous information about him, the detachments, on the other hand, who have to perform the outpost duties cannot get any intelligence about the enemy unless they are in close proximity to him. Hence it will be seen that while the two tasks to be performed are equally important, they must necessarily be quite distinct. It is necessary that the commander of the advanced cavalry force should have continuous reports concerning the movements of the enemy, in order to transmit them to the head-quarters of the army in rear. But the object of the patrols sent out by the outposts or columns on the march is merely to ascertain if the enemy is within range, or at any rate quite near. The exact whereabouts of the enemy matters but little to the subordinate commanders of these columns as long as he is not within range. Hence, whenever the enemy is not to be found within the zone of country which is reconnoitred by the patrols of the outposts and picquets, it is necessary that contact should be maintained with him by means of detachments of scouting patrols, who should look to the brigade or divisional cavalry commander, and who should receive instructions from, and send in reports to him.

With regard to flankers, it is often advisable to detach

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them from the leading squadrons of the main body of the brigade, in order to prevent the strength of the advanced squadrons, which have so many demands upon them, from being unduly frittered away.

The remarks of General Verdy du Vernois on the disposition of an advanced cavalry force in his well-known work 'Die Kavallerie-Division im Armee-Verbande' are as follows:—

'The movements of armies and of corps d'armée must follow the principal roads, consequently it is these which should first engage the attention of the cavalry. It is, however, no less necessary to overrun and reconnoitre upon a sufficiently large scale the country where the enemy may chance to be, or that in which his detachments may be moving.

'The extent of country to be reconnoitred determines the amount of cavalry to be placed in the 1st line, and decides the question as to whether a division can do the work assigned to it with a single brigade, or whether another brigade must be placed in front, or even a 3rd. It is plain that the less one expects resistance, the less need there is of making the line compact, and the more the sphere of exploration can be extended.

'The main body of the division will always have to make its action felt in the direction where it has most chance of encountering the enemy, or where one supposes the main body of the forces to be found. It follows, therefore, that the main body ought to be placed at this point in rear of one of the wings, and if the extent of the 1st line is too great to enable it to give support opportunely to the wing which is attacked or opposed by the enemy, it will be necessary to give the latter great independence and a separate task, or even to assign to it, in case of need, a separate line of retreat.

'Generally speaking, a cavalry general will always keep in view the necessity of concentrating his forces, and will endeavour to avoid their dispersion. But while recognising this principle, it must be borne in mind that the carrying out by a division of cavalry of the service of exploration necessitates the detachment of large bodies in cases where

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the extent of country both in depth as in breadth, or the exigencies of the strategical situation, do not admit of having a reserve in the centre.'

Captain von Widdern[1] discusses this question of the actual disposition of the different component units of a cavalry division as follows :—

'The front and depth of a cavalry division depend, in the first instance, upon the width and extent of the zone of country which is assigned to it for exploration, and on the proximity of the enemy. The front should be defined exactly. It may be such that the cavalry division is obliged to keep the main body of its forces on a single route. On the other hand, the front assigned to the division may be such as to necessitate or to offer it the opportunity of marching on two or more parallel routes.

'In the first case, one of the light brigades with a battery should form the advanced guard, followed by the main body formed by the other 2 brigades. In the second case—viz. that of there being 2 or more parallel routes available, 2 brigades would take the main route—viz. the light brigade as an advanced guard, the heavy brigade as its main body. The least important route should be taken by the other light brigade. In the third case—viz. when there are 3 parallel routes, the brigades would march parallel to and as far as possible abreast of each other, each brigade having its own advanced guard. This latter disposition is the more favourable, inasmuch as the troops march more quickly, are more easily quartered in cantonments and fed, and occupy a greater extent of territory, a point which is of material importance as regards gaining information. As long as no contest is anticipated during the next 24 hours, this order of march ought to have the preference, even though the columns are a short day's march distant from each other. In such circumstances, a concentration of the whole division is always possible within a day.

'As soon as the first contact with the enemy is felt, the

[1] *Handbuch für Truppenführung und Befehlsabfassung*, by Von Widdern.

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division ought to contract its front, so that a concentration might easily be effected in a few hours.

'It is necessary also to arrange for a reserve. For instance, it may be managed in the following manner. The 2 first light brigades are placed in the 1st line; to each of them are assigned a route, a zone of territory, and a special portion of work, whilst the heavy brigade follows at a little distance, and takes the main route. In a country which is at all practicable for cavalry, a cavalry division is sufficiently concentrated when the main bodies of the columns following the extreme flanks are 10 kilometres (about 6–7 miles or so) from each other, while the reserve brigade is 5 kilometres in rear of them.

'When the detachments charged with the duty of exploration and scouting, which are sent on many miles ahead, signal the approach of large forces of the enemy, and when it becomes necessary to reinforce one of the flank brigades with the reserve brigade, this can be done in half an hour if the brigade to be reinforced is on the same route; and in an hour and a half if it is on another route, counting from the moment that the brigade requiring support sends to ask for it. All this is on the supposition that there is a prospect of the cavalry being able to maintain itself in front.

'The complete concentration of the division can always be effected—i.e. if the lines of communication are in good order—in a few hours, either on one of the brigades of the 1st line, or on the reserve brigade.

'In all cases the division should take up a formation, such as has here been prescribed, when the hostile cavalry is not numerous or enterprising, or when the country is open and well provided with transversal roads, as a concentration can under these circumstances be completely effected in a few hours. Moreover, the scouts can widen the front to be explored by at least 6 or 7 kilometres (3 or 4 miles) by extending out on the flanks of both wings, so that the total front to be explored by the division could be made to stretch over 25 kilometres.

'The more distant the brigades marching on parallel

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lines are from each other, the more independent, it is needless to say, they ought to be of each other. It is desirable that each of them should have a battery at its disposal, and it is only in a country where there is a fear that the artillery might hamper the march of the brigade that a battery should not be given to the advanced guard brigade.

'The staff of the division should march with the main column—i.e. with the reserve brigade. It is this latter which, equally with the other columns, must hold itself responsible for the security of the baggage train. When a detachment of infantry (on carriages) is attached for the day to a cavalry division, its place on the march is usually with the main body of the principal column either in front or in rear of the artillery. When not on the march this detachment is given the duty of protecting the cantonment of head-quarters, or employed to occupy defiles,' &c.

All the foregoing remarks apply solely to the large units or bodies which compose the cavalry division. So long as the enemy has not been found, or while only small detachments of his force have to be dealt with, or while he gives way and continues to retreat, the work which devolves upon the 1st line of the division ought to be entrusted to small scouting detachments.

'When the enemy has once been felt, contact must never again be lost unless orders to that effect are given. The division fastens on to the enemy and his different columns in such a way that the points keep up unbroken touch of his front, while the officers' and other patrols hang on to his flanks, where they have ample opportunities for observation. Superfluous parties should now be drawn in, and only such parallel and flank roads observed as, from the nature of the case, are likely to be used by the enemy. If a road or zone of ground is to be permanently watched in this way 1 or 2 officers' patrols would suffice, but a whole regiment or a whole line should never be employed.[1]

'Too much attention cannot be paid nor can too much

[1] Von Schmidt, *Instructions for Cavalry*, translated from the German by C. Bowdler Bell, p. 176, para. 12.

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value be laid upon the constant intercommunication of the different bodies, and mutual communication of all that happens, all that is found out, seen, and heard. These communications should generally be written, and in fewest words.'

With regard to the artillery, its place in the column of route, and its distribution during its advance, it has already been said that a battery should, if possible, accompany each brigade. It is not necessary, however, to push the artillery too far forward in the column, nor should it, as a rule, be detached from the main body of the brigade. With regard to this question, the remarks of Von Widdern may be regarded as sound. Thus, in dealing with this subject, he says :—

'If the division has as many batteries as brigades, each brigade retains, as a matter of course, its battery when marching by brigade. If, as often happens, the division has only 2 batteries for 3 brigades, that brigade which is eventually to be detached should take with it a battery, leaving the other to march with the main body. If the division marches upon a single route the advanced guard brigade should take with it 1 battery, and if there is any question of pursuit it should take them both.'

Verdy du Vernois also remarks :—

'One often sees at manœuvres a detachment of 2 or 3 squadrons precede a column with a battery of horse artillery attached, an arrangement which, even at manœuvres, has numerous disadvantages, because the squadrons should spread over the country, and should only keep together a small portion of their effective strength. Even this party may find it advisable to quit the road as soon as the enemy shows himself. In such a case the artillery will be forced to follow across country, over all sorts of ground, and the horses will have a great deal taken out of them before they will have been able to render the least service. Artillery has need of some little time to get the proper range, and the small parties of cavalry who are at these times to be seen in the far distance offer but a very small target to fire

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at, and they are always on the move. They can, moreover, always find an undulation of ground behind which to take shelter as soon as a shell bursts near them. In addition to this, a small body of cavalry under these circumstances has always to be thinking of how to take care of the guns, and this paralyses all its movements. For these reasons it is only under exceptional circumstances that a battery should be detailed to accompany a single regiment.'

With regard to this question of detaching guns from the main column, cases may, of course, occur where it is advisable to detach a portion of a battery; such, for instance, as a division to a detachment which has to be separated from the main column; there can be no doubt, however, that this should be regarded as a wholly exceptional measure. It is, indeed, generally recognised that there is nothing more to be guarded against than the dissemination of artillery in this manner, and it is important for the leader of a cavalry force to know how to resist the demands of commanders of detachments for a few guns.

A case in which it might be allowable thus to detach a portion of a battery would be when a detachment of cavalry has to be separated from the main column when operating in a country where the population show an active resistance, or when hostile irregular bands have to be dealt with, who will endeavour to hinder and contest the advance of the cavalry, and to bar the entrance into woods, defiles, villages, &c. &c. 'In such cases,' remarks Von Widdern, 'the mere presence, and much more the coming into action, of artillery at once gives a cavalry force a most imposing effect. A few shells thrown into a village where the population contemplate resistance, have a most marvellous effect.'

One of the more obvious contingencies to be dealt with in treating of this subject is the manner in which an enemy's attempts to break through, and probably to attack the advancing cavalry line, in order to disperse it and find out what is going on in rear of it, should best be frustrated and opposed. When the advanced cavalry on both sides are fairly matched, and have each a high opinion of themselves,

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such attempts are certain, either on one side or another, to be frequently made.

In considering this part of our subject it should be borne in mind that if the enemy means to attempt to break through the reconnoitring cavalry line, he will in most cases be obliged to make use of one or more of the roads running more or less perpendicular to his front, especially if he intends to employ his artillery to support his attempt. This road (or roads) will probably be already made use of by one's own cavalry for its advance. Hence if constant communication be kept up, and rapid mutual support between the different advancing columns has been properly organised, every threatened advance in force of the enemy's cavalry ought to be learnt in good time, and then there should be no difficulty in frustrating any attempts which he may make. Such attempts will generally be made by the enemy in order either to prevent one's own cavalry from making any further reconnaissance of his own cavalry, or to enable him to make observations and reconnaissances for himself. The instructions of Von Schmidt, when dealing with this subject, are as follows :—

'If a portion of the line becomes engaged with the enemy, it will be advantageous to support it from the rear by the nearest bodies of troops, and at once to inform the other troops of the circumstance, at the same time directing them to advance resolutely, and to support it by acting against the flanks and rear of the enemy, and to observe as much as possible what is taking place there, which, under all circumstances, is the main object to be kept in view. If the enemy shows serious offensive intentions it will be necessary for the attacked cavalry to retire, at the same time rapidly sending information to this effect to the Commander-in-Chief. The direction of the retreat will depend upon the designs of the enemy ; but the retiring cavalry will, as far as possible, endeavour to draw the enemy after it in a false direction, in order thereby to obtain favourable conditions for its own army. In order to act judiciously in such cases, a just appre-

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ciation of the state of affairs and a sound judgment as to what will be advantageous are necessary.'[1]

Another sound principle to bear in mind and to act upon as far as possible is, that the detachments engaged with the enemy ought to find their first support from their own corps. If a section of country of a certain extent is told off to a brigade, and if circumstances demand that this brigade should be subdivided into several columns, it is a mistake to put an entire regiment into 1st line and to provide it with the supports which may be necessary to it by means of detachments borrowed from other corps. Such an arrangement as this would greatly hinder the transmission of orders, especially for the commander of the regiment, and would also render proper surveillance difficult.

With regard to the advisability of an advanced cavalry force engaging and coming to blows with the enemy, Von Schmidt's remarks are as follows, and they will be regarded as sound :—

'Actual fighting is only a means to the end, and is only to be preferred to manœuvring and making demonstrations when the hostile cavalry has too great an opinion of itself, and tries to prevent our reconnaissance.'

Thus far the dispositions which should be made for an advanced cavalry force while it is actually at work—that is, when it is on the march—have been discussed. It remains to consider how the force should protect itself when stationary—that is, when seeking repose in cantonments or in the camp, either in the daytime or at night.

In discussing this point, one of the main things to be considered is whether the squadrons and regiments in 1st line should occupy billets and cantonments, or whether they, as well as the main body of the division, ought to bivouac.

As nothing is more ruinous to cavalry in the long run than having to camp out in all weathers, it must always, for obvious reasons, be a great object to obtain as much shelter

[1] Von Schmidt's *Instructions for Cavalry*, translated from the German by Major C. Bewdler Bell, 8th Hussars, p. 177.

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as possible for the men and horses. It may therefore be laid down as a general rule that the main body of an advanced cavalry force ought to avail itself even of the most miserable billets or cantonments in preference to a bivouac.

The advanced posts, such as the picquets, &c., will, of course, have to be out in the open, as also oftentimes supports and reserves. With regard to the latter, it will often be possible to find a house or isolated farm close to the spot where it is advisable to post them, in which men and horses can find shelter.

Should the locality where the reserve is posted be of an extent out of all proportion to its effective strength, the reserve will do well to bivouac in the open, especially in an enemy's country. It may sometimes, however, be possible for it to find an isolated range of buildings or a farm, which it can occupy and put in a state of defence.

The following remarks of Von Widdern upon the comparative advantages of bivouacs and cantonments embrace the main points which it is necessary to bear in mind:—

'In the day time the bivouac is a better guarantee against surprise than a cantonment, but at night a cantonment offers more protection against the effects of a surprise. If the advanced posts fail in their duty, a surprise is possible in any conceivable case; but the losses in men, horses, and material will not be less in a troop which is suddenly attacked in a bivouac than in one which is quartered in billets.

'If a body of troops is surprised when in billets, it will be advisable for it to defend itself in the houses on the spot rather than take refuge in the open country. It is, moreover, prudent for a body of cavalry not to occupy a locality which is too extensive for its effective strength, and which it is not able sufficiently to guard and barricade. In any case, a detachment of the enemy which has succeeded in approaching us during the night without being discovered is more dangerous for our cavalry when it is in bivouac than when it is quartered in billets (in a village or houses, &c.), because a rapid fire even at 1,500 paces off, is sufficient to throw disorder into great masses of cavalry (when in bivouac) in a

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few minutes and to occasion them serious losses and force them to change their camp. Troops quartered in billets are much less exposed.

'Hence the cavalry division which is in contact with the enemy, after having done its work for the day, should not scruple, if necessary, to retrace its steps a little in order to shelter the main body of the column and to withdraw from a neighbourhood which is too near the enemy. While the head of the advanced guard remains in position and protects itself according to circumstances and the natural conformation of the ground, the main body will be brought back into the villages which are nearest to the road or roads upon which the advance is being made. Even if the troops, in consequence of this extra distance which will have to be traversed, should not be able to get to rest till somewhat later, they will find compensation for this in the fact that their repose for the night will be more secure, because it will be further out of reach of any attempts of the enemy, and the next day both horses and men will be found fresher and more able to work than if they had passed the night in bivouac. The great point to be avoided is the occupation of too great a breadth of front, and security will be better obtained by a deep échelon formation.

'Doubtless, however, in face of an adversary who is superior in numbers and of an enterprising spirit, the main body ought to be held concentrated in bivouac, especially if both sides are massed and facing each other, and if a serious conflict is likely to take place next day, because in this case it is necessary that the concentration should be effected without any risk.'

This part of the subject cannot be better concluded than by quoting verbatim the instructions of Von Schmidt as given in Major Bowdler Bell's translation, which has been already largely drawn upon in this chapter :—

'On the proximity of the enemy, his condition, dispositions, and spirit of enterprise will further depend whether it is advisable to allow the squadrons and regiments in 1st line to occupy billets or cantonments during the advance, or

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whether they ought to bivouac as well as the other portions of the division. The measures to be taken in the first case for the security of the troops will depend on the general situation of affairs; it will be frequently advisable to barricade the issues of cantonments in or immediately in rear of the line of outposts, especially of the former, whenever there are time and means to make the defence as complete as possible. A commander therefore, on arriving in cantonments, must thoroughly reconnoitre the place with a view to its defence, if necessary; carefully consider the measures that would have to be taken; point out to his troops the positions which they would have to take up; occupy the outlets leading towards the enemy, so that in a given case everyone would know what to do on a given signal. It will often be best for cavalry, when in an exposed position, and liable to be surprised, especially by night, to content itself with the defence of the cantonments occupied, and confine itself to large enclosures and massive buildings, leaving the horses in their stables. The carbines, however, will not remain with the horses, but always with men who must be billetted near their horses.'[1]

In conclusion, it may be as well for the sake of clearness to ask what are the main principles of action which should guide the disposition of an advanced cavalry force. They may be summed up as follows:—

1. That it is necessary in arranging for the disposition of an advanced cavalry brigade or division, to which a zone of country has been assigned for reconnaissance, to bear in mind the necessity of being able quickly to concentrate its whole available force.

2. That in order to effect this object it is absolutely necessary to avoid a too great dispersion of the force at disposal. Hence the larger units, regiments, or brigades, should be kept on several roads not too far apart, between which constant lateral communication should be kept up.

3. That the exploration of the country in front must be

[1] *Instructions for Cavalry*, by Von Schmidt, translated from the German by Major C. Bowdler Bell, 8th Hussars.

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effected by small patrols, which, when once they have found the enemy, must never lose touch of him again.

4. That a reserve should be maintained by keeping back a brigade or regiment. Where the whole cavalry force consists of a brigade, a regiment, or the wing of one, would naturally form the reserve.

5. That as soon as the enemy is found and the main line of his advance is ascertained, the cavalry force should contract its front so that a concentration may, if necessary, be effected in good time.

With regard to provisions, the division or brigade should also have with it a convoy organised in a permanent manner. As to forage, &c., where the theatre of operations is a highly civilised country, there are no troops in a campaign who will find themselves so favourably situated for providing for their wants in this respect as an advanced cavalry force, inasmuch as it will have at its command all the resources (as yet untouched) of the countries into which it may penetrate. It should, therefore, be able to take care of itself tolerably well in this respect. It is necessary, however, to be prepared for all contingencies, and at any rate to make sure of a supply of oats. If, therefore, the division or brigade does not possess, or is not provided with regular convoys of forage, it must improvise them on the spot, forming them from the vehicles which have been requisitioned.[1] The horse and also the drivers of these vehicles will have to be comprised in the calculations that are made for the wants of the troops.

[1] In 1870–71 each of the regiments in one of the German cavalry divisions had on an average a train of 9 waggons laden with oats. This number of vehicles, however, was not always allowed to march directly in rear of the regiments, so that oftentimes each squadron had to content itself with a single 4-horse waggon for the transport of oats and rations only. In the French army an independent cavalry division, operating in advance of an army, is supposed always to have with it at least half a day's supply of oats.

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CHAPTER XVII.

THE ORGANISATION OF A PURSUIT.

Difficulties of carrying out theoretical idea of a pursuit—Difficulties of the victor in ascertaining the extent of his victory—Ways in which all traces of the enemy may be lost—Instances from recent campaigns of the failure of cavalry to keep touch of retreating enemy—Circumstances which favour the retreat of the enemy—Instances from recent campaigns—Measures to be adopted by the cavalry of the victor in order to keep touch of a retreating foe—Cases in which pursuing cavalry may be completely baffled—Duties of scouting-parties in a pursuit—Orders issued from head-quarters regarding pursuit—Views of Von Widdern on this subject, &c. &c.—Importance of pursuing columns destroying railways in rear and on flanks of the retreating foe—Pursuit carried out solely by cavalry not likely to be effective—Kind of pursuit which would ensure most decisive results—Example from Franco-German campaign.

THEORETICALLY speaking, of course it is hardly necessary to say that a victory should be immediately followed up by a pursuit. The experience of actual war, however, has again and again shown how hard, nay, often how impossible it is to carry this theory into practice. As a matter of fact, nothing is often more difficult than to choose the right moment for taking up the pursuit, and this difficulty will always be felt after a combat of any importance, and in which any considerable number of troops on both sides are engaged.

As a general rule the victor, though he may be convinced that he has really gained the battle, will not be able to realise the importance or extent of his victory till the most favourable moments for taking up the pursuit have passed away. If the task of successfully conducting a pursuit is a hard one for the cavalry of a victorious army which has never entirely

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lost contact with its beaten or retreating foe, the difficulties with which it has to cope are tenfold increased when the touch of the enemy has been temporarily lost. This may happen in many ways. For instance, either the enemy may have changed his plan of operations, or, after a defeat or before a decisive battle, he may make a sudden and secret retreat. These difficulties of regaining touch of the enemy are naturally greater or less in proportion to the ignorance which exists as to the route or routes which may have been taken by him. Thus the German cavalry had the greatest difficulty, in 1870, in refinding the army of Marshal MacMahon when the touch of that general's forces was lost immediately after the battle of Wörth, and when the shattered débris of his army escaped towards Champagne by the defiles of the Vosges.

On August 7, 1870—i.e. the morning after the battle of Wörth—the head-quarters of the 3rd German army was completely in the dark as to the routes or line of retreat which MacMahon had taken. Accordingly 2 divisions of cavalry, and afterwards 4, were ordered to find out his line of retreat and regain touch of the enemy, who had been completely beaten on the previous evening. For a long time the utmost uncertainty prevailed, and yet the traces which the retreating French had left in their track were numerous, the population of the country showed no disposition to resist, and from the Vosges to the Marne the German reconnoitring parties met with a most insignificant opposition. In other words, everything was in favour of the German cavalry. In spite of this, however, it was not till 20 hours after the battle had come to an end, and not till the German cavalry had traversed between 30 and 40 miles, and spent many long hours in the saddle, that contact, and then only with a portion of MacMahon's army, was regained. This was on August 7, 1870, near the town of Saverne.

When, as has often happened, the combat has been prolonged till nightfall, and when at the moment the last echoes of the artillery fire die away, there has been no opportunity of forming any clear idea of the exact situation of the enemy,

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it is often absolutely necessary to wait till morning in order to find out how matters stand, so that any further decisive measures may be based on the actual state of affairs. If on the morrow the weather happens to be foggy or misty, there arises a new difficulty in addition to those already existing, and very often the favourable opportunity for a pursuit will have passed away, ere it is possible to see that the enemy has completely evacuated his position, and before any idea can be formed by an actual examination of the battle-field of the extent of the defeat inflicted upon the enemy.

Favoured, then, by the darkness of the night, the enemy has avoided a direct pursuit by a forced march. But in what direction has he gone? That is the question to be solved first of all. It is upon the cavalry that the solution of it devolves, and they must first of all regain contact with the vanquished foe.

It was thus that matters generally stood at the end of the greater number of the battles fought upon Austrian and French soil in 1866 and 1870–71, and especially in the case of those contests which were interrupted by the darkness of the night. After the battles of Königgratz, Wörth, Spicheren, Orleans, Amiens, St. Quentin, and other minor engagements more or less serious, the conqueror completely lost contact with the enemy. After the battle of Königgratz this contact was not completely established till the 6th day; after the battle of Wörth, contact was, it is true, regained the next day, owing to the pursuit of the 4th Cavalry Division and some detachments of Bavarian cavalry; but in the evening of that day all traces of the French were again lost, so that, as already mentioned, the Germans remained a very long time in utter ignorance of the direction followed by the shattered remnants of MacMahon's army (which had avoided pursuit by making forced marches during two successive nights), as also of the direction of the retreat of De Failly's corps. After the battle of Spicheren the Germans also lost all contact with the enemy, who had withdrawn during the night. This contact had then to be regained, which was not done until two days later.

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In winter campaigns, when the beaten army can make use of the long nights to carry out its retreat in secret, and the victor can only carry on the pursuit during the comparatively few hours of daylight, there will most frequently be seen that which has just been described—viz. complete loss of contact, and great difficulty in regaining it.

The army, then, which has been favoured by fortune of war, and which sees night coming on before there is any decisive issue to the conflict, ought not to let its cavalry remain inactive, even during the night. On the contrary, all the cavalry, reunited on the field of battle, should be pushed forward on the main roads, so that, in the event of a pursuit being determined upon, it should hold itself ready in close proximity to the most advanced position occupied by its own army, to launch forward its forces at daybreak in pursuit. During the night officers' patrols should endeavour to gain news of the enemy's movements, especially by pushing forward on those roads which it is probable he would make use of in case of a retreat.

This assembly of the cavalry towards the close of the day or during the obscurity of the night is, on battle-fields of any great extent, by no means an easy task. Nevertheless, every effort must be made to effect this difficult work, so as to get the cavalry together in good time; and it is also necessary that the cavalry itself should be equal to the occasion, if it receives orders to betake itself, in spite of the darkness of the night, to a different point from where it has been engaged during the day, or despite the fatigue and exhaustion of men and horses, either to keep on the enemy's track, or to refind it if it has been lost.

The officers entrusted with the command of the different bodies of cavalry ought to remember that upon their arm devolves the task, without any formal order, of preserving contact with the enemy, and of unhesitatingly undertaking his pursuit. They should therefore give directions upon their own responsibility for all that is necessary to obtain this double object, and should without any delay, at the close of a battle, send their staff and orderly officers to the

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commander-in-chief, in order to inform him of the position in which the cavalry may happen to be, and of the measures which they have taken in anticipation of an active pursuit, as well as to ask for fresh instructions.

The commanders of the cavalry posted on the wings of the line of battle should specially endeavour to carry out the directions just detailed, inasmuch as the commander-in-chief has a right to expect that these officers will take all possible measures to obtain verbal instructions.

The cavalry posted on the wings of the line of battle should seek during the night to anticipate, and to reconnoitre the routes on which the enemy will probably retreat. As long as these routes are more or less encumbered with the enemy's troops, it will be sufficient to employ officers' patrols to watch them, and to keep up the contact; on the other hand, should the enemy have made good the retreat so that the roads are clear, and afford no definite clue, they should be employed in complete squadrons, which should push on their investigations as far as necessary, and should leave posts of communication behind them as they go on.

When these squadrons are able to ascertain definitely that the enemy is in retreat, and have found out the route or routes he has taken, they should not cease to follow him up as long as circumstances will permit them to do so. Meanwhile the main body of the cavalry keeps up communication with these detached squadrons, and sends them reinforcements in case they are in want of them. As a rule, however, it should not follow on till daybreak. Less fatigued than the troops which have been employed in discovering the line of the enemy's retreat, the main body of the cavalry will be able to render better and more effective service during the day, and to take the lead as soon as the real pursuit begins. Thus pursuit will be all the more energetic and tenacious if the strength of the men and horses have been husbanded during the night.

In any case it will generally be upon the small scouting patrols that the most fatiguing work will devolve during the night, as it is their duty to maintain the actual contact with

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the enemy. In spite of the many difficulties with which they have to contend, such as that of ascertaining what is taking place in the darkness of the night, the danger of being completely lost in a strange country, &c., it is more than probable that at least some of the numerous patrols sent out will accomplish the end in view.

There are cases, however, when, in spite of the activity and skill with which the scouting patrols may carry out their work, they are liable to be completely baffled, and unable to effect anything beyond a certain point. This is especially the case when they find themselves stopped by a natural obstacle, which it is impossible for them to cross, such as a river, the passages of which are either held or have been completely destroyed by the enemy.

It was thus, for instance, that on November 28, 1870, at the close of the battle of Amiens, the German cavalry was unable to discover the direction followed by the French in their retreat beyond the Somme. It is true that the nature of this river permitted the scouting parts to reach the different points of passage, but it prevented them from going any further, as it was impassable, and the bridges had been completely destroyed by the French.

When a retreating foe, in spite of all the vigilance of the conqueror, or in consequence of his negligence, has made good his retreat, and the cavalry force sent in pursuit has not yet been able, from various causes, to come up with or regain contact with him—i.e. when all traces of him have for the time been lost, the scouting parties ought especially to make it their business to gather together all materials necessary for gaining a due appreciation of the position of the enemy, by getting possession of the most recent journals and papers at the postal and telegraph offices, by questioning the inhabitants, &c. Wherever a strong patrol, a troop, or a squadron, arrives at any place, the first visit should be to the telegraph office, in order to carry off the register of messages sent and received; to the post office, in order to get possession of the letters; to the railway station, to get possession of all documents connected with the traffic, and with the recent despatch

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and arrival of trains ; to the prefecture or sub-prefecture, to examine any papers which might have reference to the movements of troops. When the exploring detachments were strong enough, and as soon as they had ascertained that no enemy was present in the place, this work was, in the campaign of 1870, divided by the German scouting parties, and a descent was made simultaneously on the railway station and the post office.

In organising a pursuit, the first instructions issued relative to this operation ought, in general, to embrace the following points—viz. a brief *résumé* of the successful results of the fight and the general direction of the enemy's retreat; a few words vividly depicting the advantages to be reaped from a vigorous pursuit, and which should tend to reanimate the exhausted energies of the troops. Finally, a brief explanation of the main objects which it is desired to attain by this supreme effort. After this should follow:—

1. Instructions for the cavalry divisions launched forth in pursuit of the enemy on the different roads. These instructions should clearly specify what destruction should be made of telegraph lines and railways which run to the rear or flanks of the enemy ; they should direct the cavalry division to sever the connection of the main line upon which the enemy may be found to be retreating, with any branch lines, in order to render easier the capture of the rolling stock, &c. In certain circumstances the cavalry will, moreover, be charged to prevent the enemy from carrying out any works of railway destruction.

2. The designation of a sufficiently numerous body of pioneers, who sometimes have to accompany cavalry columns in order to carry out special tasks ; also the designation of infantry detachments who ought to follow the cavalry without delay in order to support it. These latter and their equipment should, whenever practicable, be mounted on carriages.

3. Designation of any special tasks which it is expected that the cavalry commander will carry out.

4. The indication of the place where the army head-

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quarters will provisionally be established, and also the points to which the cavalry detachments advancing along the different roads will send their reports *direct*, and from whence they will take their orders up to a fixed hour. This is generally noon on the first day of a pursuit.

5. Arrangements for fresh supplies of ammunition and stores.

6. The place to which the prisoners should be sent.

Captain Von Widdern discusses at some length the measures to be taken for efficiently carrying out a pursuit. With regard to the part which the cavalry should play in it, he remarks as follows :[1]—

'Masses of cavalry should be concentrated on the route on which to all appearance the main body of the enemy is likely to be met with. As many batteries of horse artillery as possible should accompany the cavalry, and if circumstances admit of it, some companies of infantry carried on carriages and abundantly provided with cartridges, as was done repeatedly with success during the campaign of 1870–71. It is, moreover, desirable that the cavalry should be accompanied by an officer of the head-quarters staff, who should fulfil the functions of official reporter. With regard to the other roads, they should be scoured by small detachments, such as regiments, squadrons, strong patrols commanded by officers, &c.

'The strength of these bodies must vary in proportion to that of the whole cavalry force employed. In all cases the addition of some guns to the pursuing force is most useful ; the mere appearance of artillery always produces the greatest effect upon an enemy overtaken in full retreat, and perhaps also in a state of utter disorder ; it tends also to give the pursuing cavalry force greater completeness and prestige, and to encourage its audacity. It may be added, also, that if any fresh engagement should take place with a considerable body of the enemy's troops, the firing of the guns acts as a guide to any bodies of the pursuing force who may be advancing by parallel roads.

[1] See *Handbuch für Truppenführung und Befehlsabfassung*, by Von Widdern.

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'It is very important to send frequent reports to head-quarters, which ought to be at some fixed point, and to follow at a certain distance in rear. "Negative reports"—i.e. those indicating the points where the enemy has *not* been met with, or the routes on which no traces of his retreat have been discovered—are no less important than other reports. It must not be omitted to attach to each report a return of the number of prisoners made up to the very hour of sending off the report, showing the branch of the service, and the corps to which such prisoners belong.

'The commanders of the cavalry march with their main columns, and after notifying in a cursory fashion to Army Head-quarters the most important facts that have been ascertained, and results that have been achieved by the pursuit, they will at their first halting place furnish a daily detailed report of all that has taken place. The circumstances of the moment must decide if the officer of the head-quarters staff, who has been detailed as official reporter, is to return the same evening to head-quarters in order to report verbally his views, and to recount the facts which he may have observed.'

The same author also discusses the case already supposed—i.e. when, after a defeat or before a battle which is imminent, an enemy is forced, or thinks it prudent, to make a rapid and secret retreat. He gives the following as a specimen of the orders and instructions which might be issued to a pursuing cavalry force of 2 divisions under such circumstances:—

'The 1st cavalry division will endeavour to-morrow morning to re-establish the touch of the enemy.

'With this object the main body of the division will proceed in the direction of A, smaller detachments will proceed towards B and C, and will act so as to press the enemy very closely.

'The cavalry will also ascertain whether scattered fragments of the enemy's forces have escaped by way of Z.

'The 2nd cavalry division will immediately advance with all its forces in the direction of E, passing by D. The commander-in-chief wishes to lay especial stress upon the importance of reaching the bridge of E before to-morrow

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evening, before its destruction can be effected by the enemy. On the other hand, it is necessary that the enemy's communications with the fortress of F should be interrupted. In order to be able to maintain possession of the said bridge the division will be supported without delay by a battalion of chasseurs, for whom carriages will be provided.

'With regard to the further movements of the 2nd division, after having ensured the possession of the bridge at E, it will endeavour to gain the left flank of the enemy's column of march, and will do its utmost to destroy the railway near H, which the enemy will doubtless endeavour to reach in order to use it for the transport of his troops. It is of the greatest importance to capture the rolling stock of this railway.

'Prisoners will be conducted to P.

'The head-quarters of the army will proceed to-morrow provisionally as far as M, to which place the commanders of the different pursuing columns will send their reports direct up to noon, and eventually by relays of orderlies. By the same agency they will receive the orders sent out to them.

'Officers of the head-quarters staff will be attached to the cavalry divisions, in order to send in reports to army head-quarters on the general situation of affairs.

'It is extremely important that the pursuing force should not delay to make known the roads upon which *no* traces of the enemy have been met with.'

When the enemy has at his disposal, immediately in his rear, a line of railway which he can reach in a march, or at any rate in a few marches, the victor engaged in the pursuit should strain every nerve to prevent his making use of it to facilitate his retreat. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that the victor's pursuing columns should without the smallest delay reach the probable point where the retreating foe will first reach the railway. These columns should be of considerable strength, and be composed of the 3 arms ; cavalry detachments should also simultaneously be sent forward, accompanied by pioneers, to destroy or temporarily render *hors de service* any lines by means of which the

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enemy, if he once succeed in carrying off his forces by embarking them on the railway, can escape in a lateral direction.

It may be observed that a pursuit carried out exclusively by cavalry, with the object of immediately gaining contact with an enemy who has secretly withdrawn his forces,[1] or even any pursuit carried out only by cavalry, unsupported by infantry columns,[2] will seldom lead to a success of any real importance.

In a pursuit, the direction which will ensure the most decisive results will always be that which tends to push the enemy off the line of communication which connects him with his base of operations, and from his sources of supply. The Franco-German campaign offers two memorable examples of the consequences to an army of being thus driven from its lines of communication. In January 1871, after several defeats, the army of Bourbaki was driven into Switzerland. Previous to this, the army of Bazaine, beaten at Spicheren and Colombey-Nouilly, was pushed off its line of communication with Châlons.

The troops which in an engagement have taken an active part in directly causing the retreat of the enemy will rarely have an opportunity of following him up during his retreat otherwise than in a direction more or less perpendicular to their front. On the other hand, other fractions of the army, such as the cavalry, from their position with regard to the enemy's line of communications, will often be in a position to co-operate with other troops, so as to drive the adversary from his base of operations.

An indispensable condition towards effecting this result consists of quickly notifying all important intelligence to the other bodies of troops which may be co-operating in the pursuit, and prompt use should be made by the cavalry of orderlies, or, if necessary, of small parties for this purpose.[3]

[1] *E.g.* the pursuit after the battle of Wörth.

[2] *E.g.* the pursuit after the battle of Orleans.

[3] The dispositions of General Goeben for carrying out an energetic pursuit of the French after the battle of St. Quentin, in January 1871, may be quoted as an example of what can, under adverse circumstances, be done.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

DUTIES AND TASK OF CAVALRY DURING A RETREAT.

Difficult nature of duties of cavalry during a retreat—Success with which retreats have frequently been carried out—Necessity for cavalry of beaten army to keep touch of the enemy—Disastrous consequences of neglect of this precaution by the French cavalry in Franco-German war—Instances after battles of Spicheren and Mars la Tour—The French cavalry after the battle of Wörth—German cavalry after the battle of Coulmiers—The German cavalry after the battle of Bapaume—Manner in which cavalry of retreating army should be used in a retreat—Main points upon which it should endeavour to obtain intelligence—Various contingencies which may arise—Necessity of sending out scouting parties to watch the progress of pursuing columns—Great advantage of doing this—Instance from Franco-German war.

If the duties of cavalry in effectually carrying out a pursuit are great, even far more so are those which devolve upon this arm in the contrary case—i.e. when its own side is forced or deems it prudent, from any cause, to retreat.

If the retreat immediately follows a defeat, the retreating force will always do its best to withdraw the main body of its troops from the pursuit, and to put a sufficient distance between themselves and their enemy, so as to be able to reform and reorganise the different bodies in retreat. Numerous instances drawn from recent campaigns show the frequency and the success with which such retreats can be, and have been carried out, as soon as the shades of night favour the efforts of the retreating force.[1]

In spite, however, of the success which has often crowned

[1] See last chapter.

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the efforts of beaten forces, in many of these instances the troops in retreat would have done well, and avoided much subsequent loss and disaster if they had taken the precaution of leaving even a small body of cavalry to watch and maintain observation of the movements of the enemy who had beaten them. The adoption of this measure would, as Von Widdern has well pointed out, have been especially advantageous to the French in the Franco-German war in their retreats from those battle-fields in which their cavalry had not been entirely carried away in the stream of miscellaneous fugitives; as, for instances, in the battles of Spicheren and also of Vionville—Mars la Tour. In this last battle, though the French cavalry had had some hard fighting, there was no reason why it should not have remained in front of the left wing of the German army whilst the right wing of the French retired upon Metz during the night of August 16–17. This negligence did not fail to produce its disastrous consequences two days later, inasmuch as the army of Bazaine was completely surprised on the 18th by the offensive movement of the Germans (of which the French were in complete ignorance), which brought on the battle of Gravelotte—St. Privat.

Again, if the cavalry has been seriously engaged at the moment of defeat, it is too often the case that it becomes entangled, and finally borne away in the stream of the retreating columns, and even in cases where the enemy makes no vigorous pursuit, does not, or cannot extricate itself till long after all chance of keeping an eye on the further movements of the victor has been lost.

A notable instance of this tendency was the conduct of the French cavalry after the battle of Wörth. During the evening of August 7, 1870, the French cavalry trailed along in the most helpless manner, amid the ruck of troops in full retreat, and it was only after a march of 7 leagues that it arrived, completely exhausted, at Saverne at 7 A.M. the next day. Even here, or, at any rate, at Sarrebourg, where the cavalry brigades were re-formed, it would have been possible for the cavalry to resume their duties of gaining intelligence of the enemy, and to find out whether his pursuing columns

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were near at hand or not, and, if so, by what routes they were advancing. On these points the French retreating columns were, on the morning of August 7, in complete ignorance. As is well known, the retreat was continued without any cessation as far as the Marne, passing by the Meurthe, the Moselle, and the Meuse without any attempt for a moment being made to utilise the French cavalry in this way; and yet during the retreat there were several occasions on which even a very small body of French horsemen might have learnt a good deal of what their adversaries were doing. As an instance of this it may be pointed out that the rear guard of MacMahon's retreating army was, on the evening of August 7, just leaving Saverne, and that at that time the most advanced camp of the German cavalry was only 7 kilometres—i.e. 4½ miles or so—from that place.[1]

The Germans, however, in one of the few retreats which they had to make during the campaign, made a similar error in neglecting to employ their cavalry to keep up contact with the enemy.

Thus, after the battle of Coulmiers, which was fought on November 9, 1870, and at the termination of which the 1st Bavarian corps retreated in order to extricate itself by a night march from the disadvantages of an isolated position, the Bavarians were till the next day without any contact with the enemy, at any rate, in the direction of Coulmiers, although there was a numerous force of cavalry available which had not been engaged at all during the day, or when the combat ceased, and which, in fact, bivouacked not far from the field of battle.

The German cavalry on this occasion was employed in the following manner: 2 brigades were charged with the task of protecting the right flank against any turning movement, while the 3rd brigade received orders to protect the left flank; the 4th brigade was to cover the rear of the columns during the retreat. No instructions, however, were

[1] See *Handbuch für Trappenführung und Befehlsabfassung*, by Von Widdern, vol. iii.

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given to the cavalry to keep touch of the enemy, with whom all contact was entirely lost. The French, for their part, had given up all idea of pursuit, and contented themselves with tardily sending forward some reconnoitring detachments. The consequence was that they were subsequently obliged to make great efforts again to find out the whereabouts of the enemy.

It was far otherwise after the battle of Bapaume, which was fought on January 9, 1871. On this occasion the French forces had attacked with greatly superior numbers the German troops, composed of the 15th infantry division, a division of cavalry, and a few other troops. After a most deadly and obstinate contest the French were obliged to retire from their position in front of Bapaume. The struggle, however, continued, and after a desperate fight the Germans triumphed, and eventually remained masters of Bapaume and of the principal positions in rear of that town. They were, however, much exhausted by these two days of incessant fighting, which had caused them serious losses; their ammunition, moreover, was well-nigh exhausted, and their position had grave strategical disadvantages.

Under these circumstances General Goeben ordered a retrograde movement for the following day, in order to withdraw his main body nearer to his reserves. While this movement was being carried out the cavalry division was directed to leave some squadrons in contact with the enemy. This precaution proved to be a very fortunate one, inasmuch as the French, who had been no less exhausted than their opponents, had retired upon Arras and Douai, after having evacuated the positions they held at nightfall. If General Goeben had neglected the precaution of leaving a portion of his cavalry to watch the movements of the enemy he would have inevitably long been in ignorance of the retreat of his opponents, and also of the route which they had taken.

How, then, is the cavalry of a retreating force to act so as to render the most useful services to its own side?

One of the most practically important points which it should endeavour to find out is whether the enemy is follow-

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ing up the pursuit with all his available forces, or whether he is employing for this purpose comparatively small detachments, so as to be able to use the main body of his forces for other operations. It will often be quite impossible for the cavalry to ascertain this point, except by acting on the offensive, and bringing into action every available squadron. It is clear that if the enemy is pursuing with all his available forces he must use the main roads. If, therefore, when the cavalry of the retreating force makes a bold stand and manages to repulse the bodies of the enemy which are heading the pursuit, these latter are seen to fall back upon larger bodies in rear who are following in their track, a good idea may soon be formed of the strength of the pursuing force. If, on the other hand, when the leading bodies of the enemy fall back they do not appear to be supported by larger bodies in rear, it may fairly be presumed that the pursuit is being carried out by only a small fraction of the enemy's forces, such for instance as by a few squadrons of cavalry. If a few prisoners can at such a juncture be made by the cavalry of the force much useful information may often be obtained.

Again, it may sometimes happen that the victor will pursue hotly at first with all his available forces, and after a time slacken in his zeal, halt the bulk of his troops, and allow the pursuit to be carried on by a few small bodies. When this is the case it will be important for the cavalry to send information in good time to the commander of the retreating force that the pursuit has slackened or virtually ceased.

If the cavalry is unable, or neglects to find out this fact, it may happen that the whole force which is in retreat may continue to flee before a few squadrons of cavalry led by bold and enterprising chiefs, but which are in reality mere weak and isolated bodies. Early information of this kind, therefore, will obviously be of the greatest importance to the commander during the retreat of his troops.

Indeed, until he is informed by his cavalry of what his enemy is doing it will often be impossible for him to come to any decision or to determine what course he should pursue.

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Once more, the enemy may altogether suspend his pursuit, while the force which is retreating continues to march. Under these circumstances it is evident that the distance between the main body which is retreating and its cavalry which is left behind to observe and keep up contact with the enemy, increases continually more and more. This naturally somewhat enhances the difficulty of the tasks which the cavalry has to carry out.

Again, a retreat may not be in any way the consequence of a defeat, but a movement designedly planned and carried out for the purpose of avoiding for the present any decisive engagements in order to gain time or to draw the adversary into ground where he may be attacked with greater advantage.

It is only by contemplating these various contingencies and situations which may arise that one is able to realise how various and arduous are the services which may have to be rendered by cavalry during a retreat.

In order to carry out as efficiently as possible these duties, there should be formed, independently of the cavalry of the regularly constituted rear guard (which has to confine itself to defensive action, as far as possible), small scouting parties, whose task it is to find out exactly what the enemy is doing or in what manner he is following up the pursuit. These scouting parties should, it need hardly be said, be formed of from 10 to 20 well-mounted men, under the command of bold and enterprising officers. Being intrusted with a definite task, these officers should be allowed entire liberty of action as to the method of carrying out what they have to do, and should be under no obligation to conform to the movements of the rear guard. Being made acquainted with the route to be followed by the troops in retreat, and being well informed of all the news which the commander of the rear guard has received up to the moment of starting, the leaders of these scouting parties should find their principal sphere of activity on the flanks of the route or routes followed by the enemy or on the flanks of the zone of country which he occupies.

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Consequently, when the retreat is being carried out by several parallel routes at the same time, it will generally be the retreating columns on the flanks which have to furnish these scouting parties.

In order to find out what is going on in rear of the bodies of the enemy's troops who are heading the pursuit, it will be necessary for the scouting parties to endeavour to gain some points outside the line of march from which a good view can be obtained of the enemy. As soon as the foremost troops in pursuit have passed by these points and have been sufficiently observed, the scouting parties, leaving their places of concealment, should thoroughly reconnoitre the country just traversed by the enemy. If the result of these observations is to establish the fact that other columns are following those whose march has already been observed, it will be of great importance to reach points whence the strength and composition of these columns can also be noted. It need hardly be said that these exploring detachments should carry out their task with as little noise as possible, and, unless they are in a friendly country, that they should endeavour to find out all they want by their own observation, and should endeavour to avoid as much as possible questioning the inhabitants.

It must be obvious that there will be many occasions when the scouting parties of a retreating force will not be able to effect much in this way. But even when they have been able to do so and have found out all that they want to know, their difficulties are by no means at an end. They will have to find a way through the enemy's line of advance posts, and consequently to avoid the roads. But when once they are discovered and pursued, then their only chance of safety will be a speedy flight right through the enemy's lines. If the party is dispersed, there is always a good chance that one or two men will succeed in reaching the commander of the rear guard and be able to report to him the actual state of affairs.

When the scouting parties of the retreating force have ascertained for certain that even the leading bodies of the

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enemy's troops have suspended the pursuit, whilst their own rear guard continues in its retreat, or that the enemy's columns have retired or made a flank movement, they will of course lose no time in reporting these incidents. At the same time they will not fail still to maintain touch of the enemy, and act independently of their own rear guard if it is necessary or expedient to do so.

The advantages and even the necessity of employing these independent scouting parties will be especially manifest when the retreat is not the consequence of a defeat, but the result of a deliberately planned movement made in order to avoid any decisive engagement for a time. In such a case as this it would be obviously of the highest importance to the commander of the retreating force to be kept acquainted with every movement of his foe.

Such was the retreat during the Franco-German campaign of 1870–71 of Werder's corps, when, after the evacuation of Dijon, he retired before the far superior forces of Bourbaki and made his well-known retreat upon Belfort preparatory to gaining a brilliant victory over his adversary. Whilst General Werder went back step by step before the enemy's columns, which were advancing from Besançon to Dijon, two other corps-d'armée, under the command of General Manteuffel, were marching from the Upper Seine against the rear of Bourbaki's army. During his retreat it was only by a display of the utmost energy and vigilance that the cavalry of Werder's corps was enabled to maintain continuous contact with Bourbaki's forces and to watch his movements.[1]

[1] The following were the instructions of Count Moltke to General Werder, addressed to him under date of January 7, 1871, from the head-quarters at Versailles:—'In the event of a retrograde movement, your Excellency should nevertheless take care constantly to preserve the most direct contact with the enemy, so that if the latter should at any time weaken his forces, you would be able at once to resume the offensive, and thus prevent him from throwing himself, with superior numbers, on the 2nd and 7th corps, which are marching to aid you.'

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CHAPTER XIX.

NECESSARY MEASURES PREVIOUS TO AN ADVANCE.

Manifold and various details to be arranged and contingencies provided for previous to the march of a cavalry force—Comprehensive list of these as given by Colonel Pierron—Concluding remarks.

It is hardly necessary to point out that before the march of a cavalry force which has to cover the advance of its own army can be efficiently organised, the cavalry commanders and their staffs will not only have to receive detailed instructions from army head-quarters, but that also when these have been received there will always be manifold details and contingencies which will have to be foreseen and provided for ere any start can be made.

Colonel Pierron, in his well-known and comprehensive work entitled 'Les Méthodes de Guerre actuelles et vers la fin du XIX^e^ siècle,'[1] has dealt with this subject, and has laid down certain general instructions, and furnished a list of details which are worthy of attention, and which will be useful to bear in mind.

These instructions and details are so comprehensive that they will be found to include nearly all possible contingencies in almost any campaign, and I can hardly, therefore, do better than append a list of the more important of them here.

'The commander-in-chief of the army, after having determined upon his plan of operations, sends for each of the commanders of the cavalry divisions or brigades which are to be sent forward in advance of the army, and imparts to them the following information, viz. :—

[1] See vol. ii. pp. 859–861, 1580–1583.

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'That portion of the plan of operations which it will be useful to them to know.

'The duties to be performed by the division—i.e. to cover a portion of the front or a flank; to gain touch of the enemy; to screen the movements of one's own army, to unmask those of the enemy, and to give information concerning them; to occupy the passages over an important river or stream before the enemy can do so; to hinder the mobilisation of the enemy's troops, to seize the magazines, to make requisitions, to outflank the enemy's wings, to destroy his lines of communication and of supply, such as railways, roads, telegraph lines, canals, &c.

'The proclamations which are to be published in the enemy's country, orders to the communes or districts to give up their arms, and to furnish provisions, abolition of recruiting, &c.

'All that is known of the enemy up to date, of the composition of his army, of the positions held by him, and of his intentions; the doubtful points which it is desirable to clear up, the prints of the uniforms of the hostile army, &c.

'A cipher for correspondence.

'The portion of the front or flank which the brigade or division should reconnoitre, the delimitation which should be made of the zone of country to be assigned to each brigade or division, which should vary in breadth from 5 to 10 leagues; the necessity of reconnoitring both banks of any rivers or streams which may run parallel with the direction of the march. In the event of the enemy changing the direction of his march, the necessity of applying for fresh instructions.

'Funds with which to pay guides and spies.

'The commander-in-chief, moreover, notifies in what direction and to what place the intelligence concerning the enemy should be sent to him, and impresses upon his hearers the necessity of only sending him information which is of practical value—i.e. to avoid all vague generalities, but to be precise as to the nature of the enemy's troops (cavalry, artillery, or infantry), their uniforms and approximate strength, and the direction of their march.

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'He points out the bodies of infantry which the cavalry division can count on for the moment for support; and insists upon the expediency of making use of them as supports for the flanks, in order to draw the enemy's cavalry if possible into cross fires; in case there is no infantry, some squadrons on foot, and an ambuscade on the borders of defiles, will furnish a better support than the cavalry disposed entirely in line.

'As far as is possible the commander-in-chief causes a small body of infantry to follow up the cavalry division, such, for example, as a battalion of foot chasseurs to protect his rear, to support him in need, should he be driven back by superior forces, and to guard his cantonments, especially during the night.

'Finally, he completes the organisation of the division by attaching to it an officer of engineers, a detachment of military telegraphists, or at least some employés of the telegraph department, and a railway engineer to inspect the condition of the railways, and to report in good time the repairs which it is necessary to make to them.

'The commander-in-chief points out, moreover, what is to be done to the railway lines—i.e. whether they are merely to be rendered *hors de service* or to be destroyed entirely. The cavalry division should be provided with special tools for this purpose, and with dynamite or other explosive cartridges carried on the saddles in order that the men should always have them to hand, as carts or vehicles of any kind are never to hand when wanted.

'Officers who speak the language of the enemy are distributed among the squadrons at the front. In addition, one or several post-office officials able to translate manuscript are attached to the division, to seize the letters in the post offices, the official documents in the town-halls and printing-presses, to extract information from them, and to transmit them to army head-quarters.

'Finally, the general commanding the cavalry division is informed in what direction and to what place he should send his sick men and disabled horses, and where the depôts are from which he will draw any necessary supplies.

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'The general commanding the cavalry division provides himself with a general map, and also with detailed maps, identical with those of the commander-in-chief. The latter desires him, whenever he may have occasion in his reports to name any small place, to mention in brackets the name of the most important place which is nearest to it, in order to avoid the necessity of having to refer from one map to another.

'The commander-in-chief, moreover, warns the leader of the cavalry division that if the cavalry should receive the order to pursue the enemy, the plea that the horses were too fatigued to pursue will not be held as a valid reason for this order not being carried out. The horses which are not in a condition to carry out the pursuit should be left behind, and the squadrons will go forward with those which are most fit.

'In cases where the cavalry receives an order to anticipate the enemy by occupying the passages, bridges, dykes, viaducts over a stream or river, or over a ravine, not only should these passages be watched by squadrons on foot, but the cavalry should strengthen itself by occupying the borders of villages and clumps of trees, where advantageous positions can be taken up, and should push forward patrols continually, so as to be forewarned of the approach of the enemy. A report of such approach should be made direct to the commander-in-chief.

'If, on the contrary, the enemy should have been beforehand and occupied the banks of the stream, the cavalry leader should ascertain the exact extent of the position which he occupies, and should point out in his report upon which flank he has discovered a passage or point from which a view can be got of the rear of the enemy's position. The breadth of the stream should be mentioned, as well as the comparative command of the two banks, in order that the army may be able to push forward, and make its preparations for bridging with pontoons, &c., as circumstances demand. Finally, the cavalry should point out the route to be followed in order to approach under shelter as near as possible to the enemy's position.

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'The commander of every detached party, whether it be brigade, regiment, or squadron, or any smaller party, must invariably point out and name to those under him who is to take his place, and to assume his functions and responsibility whenever he temporarily has to be absent from his post.

'An officer of the general staff detailed by the commander-in-chief of the army will accompany the cavalry division, in order to gather and collate information on the special points upon which the commander-in-chief desires information, and to keep him constantly *au courant* with the general aspect of affairs. This officer being unencumbered with any duties, and being conversant with the plans of his chief, should betake himself wherever he will be able to see and judge best.

'This supplementary means of information by no means releases the commander of the cavalry force from the obligation of reporting direct to the commander-in-chief everything he learns concerning the enemy. In order the better to do this he will leave relays of orderlies between necessary points, in order to facilitate the transmission of news.'

With these instructions issued from army head-quarters may be included the following important points which have to be considered, and arrangements which have to be settled, before the commencement of operations, in order to insure the efficient working of a large cavalry force.

I will take, for the sake of example, the case of a cavalry division about to operate in front or on the flank of an army. The following list will be found, under ordinary circumstances, to embrace all points which it may be essential to consider.[1]

1. All information that has been received concerning the enemy up to date.

2. The object to be attained.

3. The extent of front to be covered—i.e. from such a point to such a point.

[1] See *Les Méthodes de Guerre actuelles vers la fin du XIX^e siècle*, par le Colonel Pierron, vol. ii. pp. 1580–1583.

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4. Connection between the brigades or divisions on either flank.

5. Their co-operation with each other.

6. The strength of the infantry force upon which the cavalry can fall back, should it be unable to hold its own in front.

7. Reconnoitring squadrons who should both obtain and keep touch of the enemy, and who can seize a bridge or defile, &c.

8. Officers' patrols to be pushed out on the front or on the flanks.

9. Roads to be told off to brigades and regiments of the 1st line.

10. Communication of the several brigades of a division with each other.

11. The route by which the reserve brigade or regiment is to march.

12. Manner in which the division is to be concentrated, and its central point in case it should be driven back by superior forces.

13. Body of troops with which the commander of the division will march. Place where he will establish his head-quarters on arrival at the day's halting place.

14. News or intelligence to be sent direct—

(*a*) To the commander-in-chief.
(*b*) To the divisions or brigades.
(*c*) To the troops in rear.

Prisoners and documents to be sent to army head-quarters.

Doubtful points concerning the composition of the enemy's forces to be cleared up.

15. Railways to destroy or to protect or to place temporarily *hors de service.*

16. Telegraphic lines to be cut off or to be watched and taken care of.

17. Bridges to be surprised or guarded.

Rivers and streams to be patrolled and watched.

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18. Place in the column of march of the reserve of cartridges, of the reserve of tools, and of the light equipage for the construction of bridges.

19. Distance at which the heavy baggage of the division is to follow. Designation of the brigade which is to furnish the escort to the baggage.

20. Relays of orderlies to be left in rear for the purpose of forwarding correspondence.

21. General alignment of position to be occupied after the march.

22. Designation of bivouacs or cantonments.

Communication between bivouacs or cantonments by means of orderlies or by postal service, alarm signals, and posts.

The situation of the head-quarters of the brigade.

23. Precautions for security: outposts, patrols, reconnaissances to be pushed far ahead. Methods in which signallers are to be made use of.

24. Telegraphic station where despatches brought in by orderlies are to be sent to.

25. Measures to be taken concerning rations and forage.

(*a*) Distribution of rations and forage.
(*b*) Organisation and march of the waggons necessary for its transport.
(*c*) Reserve of oats to be carried.

Subsequent measures to be taken :—

26. Watches to be regulated by that of the chief of the staff.

27. Requisitions to be made for—

Rations.
Forage.
Horses and waggons for transport, &c. &c.

28. Delimitation of zones of requisitions between brigades and regiments.

29. Disarmament of the enemy's country. Proclamations to be posted up.

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30. Orders to be given concerning sanitary regulations.

31. Measures to be taken to get rid of men and horses who may become sick, wounded, or ineffective.

32. Establishment of horse infirmaries.

33. Orders concerning the horse artillery and its supply of ammunition.

34. Guides, maps, and statistical documents to be procured.

35. Indication of the map which the commander of the division makes use of in giving his orders.

36. The relief of squadrons, regiments, and brigades in 1st line.

37. The despatch or recall of detachments. Arrangements for relieving them and providing them with means of transport, if necessary.

38. Reports which these detachments should furnish while detached.

39. Measures concerning discipline, provost-marshal, and assistants, &c.

40. Indents to be addressed to the nearest depôts for fresh supplies of stores.

41. Indents to be made in good time for compressed hay, forage, &c.

42. Returns to be sent in, such as :—

Accounts.
Present states.
Diaries of march.

43. Arrangements for the issue of pay to the troops.

44. Organisation of the postal service.

45. Proclamations to be given to the civil authorities.

46. Time and place to which reports are to be sent in on the morrow.

It will be seen that many of the instructions here detailed and the measures enumerated apply to active service on a larger scale and in more civilised countries than those in which it is the lot of British cavalry generally to serve. On the other hand, many of them are applicable to

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cavalry service in any campaign and on any scale. It is not, of course, to be supposed that it would be necessary in every case to take all the measures which have been named, but the list has been drawn up with the object of including as many as possible of the contingencies which would in any case have to be dealt with.

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CHAPTER XX.

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE 'THREE-LINE' FORMATION.

Different methods in vogue in chief Continental armies for manœuvring and fighting in three-line formation—These differences chiefly in matters of detail—Principles will be found to be everywhere the same—Source from which these principles have been derived and adopted—Reasons why the principles adopted by Von Schmidt met with hearty recognition, &c.—These principles are based on experience and common sense—Double *rôle* of the cavalry brigade—Different ends to be kept in view in its instruction—The brigade as one of the lines or units of a division—The brigade as an independent body—Composition of a cavalry division—Distances between the different lines—Duties of cavalry commanders—The 1st line—The 2nd line—The 3rd line—Quotations from German cavalry regulations—Necessity of having horse artillery attached to cavalry now generally acknowledged, &c. &c.

It would not be difficult, if space and the scope of this volume admitted of it, to write at a considerable length on the minor differences in the method of manœuvring and fighting in several lines which are to be found at present in the various cavalry regulations of the chief armies in Europe. These differences, however, on examination will be found to be differences, not so much of principle, but rather of comparatively unimportant detail, with which the cavalry student has no great reason to trouble himself. The main principles, both for manœuvring and also for actual fighting in the several lines, will be found to be everywhere the same. One of the main reasons for this is obvious enough—viz. that in all European armies the regulations and rules upon this subject were originally borrowed and taken

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from the same source. That source, it need hardly be said, was the once famous Part V. of the 'German Cavalry Regulations,' which was written by the late well-known General Schmidt, and first published at Berlin in June 1874.[1] The value and practical nature of the principles advocated in this chapter were so immediately recognised that in all the leading armies of Europe the cavalry at once proceeded to adopt them, and to fashion and remodel its brigade and divisional drill after the pattern which General Schmidt had prescribed. One of the main causes of the hearty recognition which this chapter met with was that, while containing (as any chapter of regulations must do) much that was well known and familiar to all, it seemed likely to supply what had been felt by the Germans in the Franco-German campaign to be a great want—viz. a definite and recognised system of tactics for cavalry in the actual battle-field. Indeed, as is well known, the principles laid down by General Schmidt have now long been recognised as calculated to meet and deal successfully with all the varied contingencies which on service may occur, and they are equally adapted for a division, a brigade, or a single corps.

Published as these instructions were ten or twelve years ago, some modifications and improvements in what was then prescribed have naturally been made in the different cavalries of Europe,[2] but this chapter will be found to contain a *résumé* of the principles, ideas, and methods upon which the fighting and manœuvring tactics of regular cavalry in all the leading cavalries of Europe are based.

It may be remarked, however, that though the ability and genius of General Schmidt brought these principles and ideas prominently into notice and adapted them to the

[1] Those who may wish to read this once famous chapter in an English form, are referred to a translation of it made in 1874 by the author of this work, and published by Messrs. Mitchell & Co., Charing Cross. In present German Cavalry Regulations this is part vii.

[2] Since these pages have been sent to press, a new manual of brigade and divisional drill has been published for the use of Russian cavalry, in which the German system is somewhat altered and modified.

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requirements of modern fighting, yet it will be seen on reflection that the reasons which make them useful are merely those of experience and common sense; and, as in all such cases, one is rather inclined to wonder why such a system of tactics had not always been adhered to. These reasons may be briefly stated as follows:—

In a cavalry fight the troops lose their formation and cohesion from the moment they are engaged in a hand-to-hand fight. If a force is defeated, its commander only gets his troops in hand when the enemy has ceased the pursuit, or when reinforcements come up to succour his defeated squadrons.

On the other hand, if the force is victorious it is carried away by the enthusiasm of the pursuit, and a certain time always elapses before it can be reformed. It is on these accounts, if on no other, that it is important to dispose the cavalry in several lines, and to prescribe in precise terms the duties and functions of each of them.

If this is not done, and orders are only sent to the commanders of the different units of cavalry when the moment for opportune action is deemed to have come, these orders will generally arrive too late. Even if they do arrive in time, a certain delay must take place before a force of many squadrons can be deployed. It is perhaps owing to this cause that cases have occurred during recent campaigns of large bodies of cavalry remaining inactive during the combat.

But if the *rôle* of each line is prescribed beforehand, there is no longer any room for hesitation, uncertainty, and doubt, and losses of time are avoided. A commander of a division has only to indicate the brigade which is to form the 1st line, and the direction of the attack, for the other brigades immediately to know what to do.

The *rôle* of the cavalry brigade is a double one.

Firstly, as forming one of the lines of a cavalry division.

Secondly, as an independent body on detached duty.

In its instruction, therefore, there are two definite and distinct ends to be aimed at, which are as follows:—

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1. The manœuvring of 2 or more regiments as forming one of the lines of a division.

2. The manœuvring of a brigade of 2 or 3 regiments as an independent body with a battery attached.

When constituted as one of the lines or fractions of a division, the brigade of 2 regiments should be exercised and made conversant with all the manœuvres which may be prescribed in the Regulations upon which its drill is based, and which may be demanded of it in the above capacity. It is absolutely necessary that in this part of the instruction all the functions of the 3 lines should be practised and understood.

When the brigade of 2 or 3 regiments is used as an independent body, the regiments composing it should be instructed in the same manner as the brigades of a division in the use of the formation in different lines. On the whole, the principles and rules which govern the employment of the different lines are applicable to the brigade as well as to the division, but with this restriction, that it is by no means necessary that the brigade should be divided into 3 lines. It can equally well be divided into 2. For instance, a regiment in 1st line and a regiment in 2nd line, if the brigade comprises 2 regiments; 2 regiments in the 1st line and 1 regiment in the 2nd line, if the brigade comprises 3 regiments, &c. &c.

A division of cavalry is composed in some armies of 2 brigades of 2 regiments, in others of 3 brigades of 2 regiments with 2 or 3 batteries of horse artillery attached.

The proper composition of a cavalry division has been the subject of much discussion. Opinion, however, seems to preponderate in favour of its being composed of 3 brigades of 2 regiments each, with, at the most, 3 batteries attached. If one of these brigades is composed of heavy cavalry it generally forms the 1st line.

A division of this strength is strong enough, on the one hand, to make a detached reconnaissance, or to cover the advance of an army in its rear, and on the other to cooperate decisively so as to insure victory on the actual battlefield.

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The distance generally maintained between the respective lines may be approximately stated as follows :—

300 paces between 1st and 2nd line.
450 paces between 1st and 3rd line.

The diagram on opposite page represents the normal formation of a cavalry division as advocated by the late General Schmidt, and is that which is now at present in vogue in the German cavalry. It may be of use for the purpose of comparison with very similar formations which have been copied from it and adopted into other armies.

The commander of a division should keep himself in constant communication with the commander of the force to which his division belongs, and all that has been said in Chapter X.[1] regarding the duties of a cavalry commander applies equally to him.

The commanders of the several lines should post themselves at about 100 paces or so in front of the centre of their respective brigades, or at the spot where they can be most useful and best direct their troops.[2]

Their orders should be given either (1) by word of command, (2) by trumpet sound if there is no danger of mistakes and misunderstandings being occasioned thereby, (3) or by means of orderly officers (gallopers).

As a general rule, orders sent to the commanders of the different lines should not be too precise, but should be couched in such general terms as to leave the commanders full liberty of choice as to the manner in which the object in view should be attained.

As soon as the enemy is encountered, the commanders of the different lines, especially of the 2nd line, should at once engage him, without waiting for any special order from the divisional commander.

As soon as the time for actual fighting has arrived, the 1st line (in the German cavalry), formed into line of squadron

[1] See page 121.

[2] In this latter case they should take all necessary measures for receiving all orders punctually and in good time.

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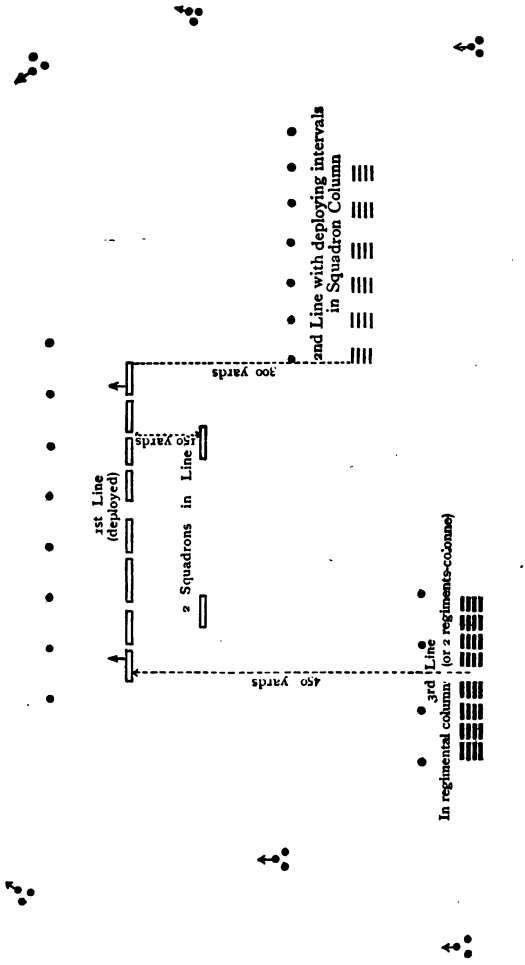
NORMAL FORMATION OF A GERMAN CAVALRY DIVISION OF THREE BRIGADES OF TWO REGIMENTS EACH.



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columns, goes forward in that formation against the enemy. During the advance this formation can be varied according to circumstances, and the regiments can, if necessary, assume the formation of column of Züge (or sections).

If the force of the enemy's artillery does not oblige the cavalry to deploy prematurely, it should not deploy until the exact direction of the attack has been determined upon.

It may sometimes be useful immediately before the shock to direct squadrons placed upon the flanks against the flank or rear of the enemy. This manœuvre, useful enough in itself, has, moreover, the additional advantage of enabling one to thwart most effectually any outflanking movements attempted by the enemy.

The 1st line is also, in some armies, supported by succour squadrons furnished by the 2nd or 3rd lines. These squadrons are considered then as forming part of the 1st line, which they follow at a distance of 150 paces. Their leaders preserve, however, entire liberty of action. These succour squadrons serve to fill up any gaps which may occur in the front of the 1st line immediately before the first shock, and which may have been caused either by difficulties of ground during the advance or by loss of intervals, &c. &c. An additional duty which they have to perform is to attack any detachments of the enemy which may attempt to take the 1st line in flank or to join in the *mêlée* where the combat threatens to take an unfavourable turn.

The 2nd Line.[1]

The 2nd line follows the 1st at a distance of about 300 yards or so. It should never cover it exactly, but should outflank it on one wing. As a general rule, in the German cavalry, it remains formed in regimental column (*Regiments-colonne*), without deploying intervals for squadrons, *as long as the 1st line has not deployed.* It is disposed in some close formation which admits of rapid deployment (in the German

[1] See also *General Principles of Cavalry Brigade and Division Drill*, p. 14.

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cavalry in line of squadron columns) the moment the 1st line advances in deployed order.

1. The 2nd line has to support the 1st by executing, whenever possible, an attack against the flank or rear of the same objective point as the 1st line, or to attack bodies of the enemy who are already approaching the said objective point. If the 1st line directs its attack against the enemy's front the 2nd line should turn against his flank. It may happen, however, sometimes that the 1st line is in the meantime already engaged in the *mêlée* with the enemy, and that it is not possible for the different squadrons of the 2nd line to intervene in the *mêlée* except in échelon, because the object of attack has not sufficient breadth to allow of the simultaneous entry into action of all the squadrons.

If, however, the enemy's reserves make their appearance in the rear of the 1st line which is the object of attack, the 2nd line will naturally at once advance to attack them. When the 1st line, in its direct advance against the adversary, finally succeeds in gaining his flank, the 2d line will direct all its efforts against his front.

2. The 2nd line covers the flanks of the 1st.

3. In cases when the 1st line wavers or falls back, the 2nd comes to its aid by throwing itself in échelon against the enemy's troops and seeking to arrest their victorious advance.

4. The 2nd line may also be used to prolong the front of the 1st by employing some squadrons for this purpose, in order to prevent the enemy from outflanking the wings of the attacking line, or to support a manœuvre which the 1st line may make with the object of turning the enemy's flank.

The 3rd Line.[1]

5. The 3rd line, which is meant as a reserve against every eventuality, keeps at a distance of about 450 paces in rear of the 1st.

[1] See also *General Principles of Cavalry Brigade and Division Drill*, p. 16.

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As a general rule it should outflank the wing which is not covered by the troops of the 2nd line. Its normal position may be said to be on the presumably protected flank; sometimes also it may be advisable that it should take up a position in the rear of the centre. The 3rd line should remain, as a rule, in compact formation, but at the same time in one which admits of quick manœuvring and deployment if necessary. In our own service double column is one of the best formations for the reserve, or 3rd line, when working in brigade. In the German service what is called 'regimental column' (*Regimentscolonne*)[1] is used up to the time when it is required for action.

There can be no doubt that the experience acquired by the cavalry charges executed by the German cavalry on August 16, 1870, over the ground bordering both sides of the route which leads from Vionville to Rezonville led the authors of the 'German Cavalry Regulations' to insert the judicious rules which are to be found therein regarding the decisive intervention of the cavalry division in the course of a battle. (This intervention, it may be observed, may at times become necessary for the purpose of making a diversion in favour of infantry which is too hardly pressed.)

'Under these conditions,' say the Regulations, 'it is necessary to act energetically, and with all the force at one's disposal, so as to ensure a victory or to avert a defeat. The cavalry ought even to act so, when circumstances demand, that it should charge infantry which is intact, and it should not forget that in such cases it can hardly reckon upon being able to take the enemy by surprise or to fall upon his flank. In any case success will be impossible unless a simultaneous use is made of the whole cavalry force which is available. It must also be supposed that in cases of this kind the object of attack will consist of all the three arms.'

As an illustration of this, the charge of the German cavalry at Vionville may be quoted. On that occasion this cavalry had not only to make its way across several lines of

[1] See Plate I., Fig. *g*.

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infantry and positions occupied by artillery, but eventually, with regiments already in disorder, greatly weakened by losses and with horses blown, to encounter the French cavalry, who hastened to support the other arms who were engaged in the struggle.

Again the German cavalry Regulations may be quoted as follows :—

'The front of the 1st attacking line will be broken by the different bodies of the enemy which it encounters.

'It is necessary that a solid 2nd line should be ready within reach to attack those fractions of the enemy who have not been touched by the charge of the 1st line or who have only been ridden through by it, and to renew the attack if the 1st line has not by its shock succeeded in overcoming all resistance.

'The 3rd line intervenes in the same manner as the 2nd ; it ought also to turn against any bodies of the enemy hastening to succour their own troops, or who may be endeavouring to turn the chances of the fight in their own favour, and finally it should seek to follow up and make the most of any success that may have been achieved.

'When the two 1st brigades attack, the 3rd brigade which constitutes the 3rd line formed (in the German cavalry) in "line of squadron columns," or, at first, "in regimental column," either follows the other 2 brigades or partially outflanks them.

'When the front of the enemy which has to be attacked is of such an extent that a division or brigade, according as the case may be (which is formed for attack in the manner which has been already described), will not be sufficient to attack the enemy simultaneously along the whole of his front, it will be necessary to employ 2 divisions or brigades, or even a larger number of these units, in order to carry out the attack to a successful issue. An attack undertaken in a formation of less depth than that which has just been indicated, or in a formation which comprises a single line, will not offer any great chances of success.'

It need hardly be said that it will further the chances of

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success if it is possible to succeed in preparing and maturing out of sight of the enemy the dispositions which may be necessary preparatory to an attack of this nature. It must, however, be admitted that all this can very rarely be carried out with the secrecy which is so much to be desired.

The necessity of having horse artillery attached to cavalry is now so generally acknowledged that it is needless to repeat the arguments which were wont to be adduced as to the advantages and disadvantages of thus employing artillery. These arguments, it may, however, be stated, will be found to be clearly and concisely stated in Major Pratt's 'Field Artillery,' pp. 218, 219.

The very important subject of the employment and management of horse artillery with a division or brigade of cavalry acting independently has not been touched upon in this volume. Two practical chapters upon this subject have recently been published for the benefit and instruction of the British cavalry.[1] Hence it would be somewhat presumptuous for any writer (who is not an artilleryman) as well as needless to attempt to add anything useful or necessary to that which these chapters contain.

[1] See Part III. of *General Principles of Cavalry Brigade and Division Drill*, published by authority in 1884. Also, see *Field Artillery*, chap. xiii. p. 218, by Major S. C. Pratt, R.A.

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